POEMS

Bole Ponjis.

Bole Ponjis.

CONTAINING

THE TALE OF THE BUCCANEER;

A BOTTLE OF RED INK;

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF GHOSTS;

AND

Other Ingredients.

BY

HENRY MEREDITH PARKER,

BENGAL CIVIL SERVICE.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

W. THACKER & Co.,

87, NEWGATE STREET, LONDON;

AND

ST. ANDREW'S LIBRARY, CALCUTTA.

1851.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

BOLE PONJIS

UNFOLDED IN A FEW WORDS PRELIMINARY.

FAIR and charming reader of the dearer, far more worthy, and more noble half of the human race; you may have heard of—courteous reader of the more disagreeable moiety; you may have been familiar with "PUNCH." I do not mean the jocund potentate who now rules hilarious from his palace in Fleet Street; neither do I allude to that edifying creature who slays Judy and hangs the hangman, to the infinite delight of the people's majesty in all public thoroughfares; still less do I advert to the punch, whack, thwack, or thump, which is delivered and received, on all suitable occasions, with such entire

equanimity and infinite gusto, by the bellicose natives of "this warlike isle." No! I refer to none of those things, but to the bland, genial, and harmonious composition which, "In my hot youth, when George the Third was King," soothed a Regent's cares of empire, and did then, and now, shed a tender glow of generous and convivial immortality over the pleasant city of Glasgow.

Perhaps, honoured reader, you may have heard of the PUNJAB or region of the Five Waters; pretty certainly you never *did* hear, unless you have sojourned in British Asia, of a PUNCHAYT or Jury of Five.* But you have heard of Punch, the jovial and joyous drink, without either knowing of, or caring for, the great fact, that the name and the thing, which is

* The bloody and remorseless democracy of the Kalsah, or Seik army, was also ruled, or misruled, by red handed juries of five, called "Panch," or as Major Edwardes adds, "vulgarly, Punch." A rose by any other name will smell as sweet, but that such unmitigated rascals should have been called "Punch," afflicts me.

also a mystical combination of the number five, came from

> "Where the gorgeous east
> Showers on her kings barbaric, pearl and gold:"

thus however it is. An old writer, one of the early voyagers to India, says that he arrived at a place called Sootanooty, (now Calcutta) where certain of our countrymen, servants of the Merchant Adventurers, trading to the East Indies, managed a small factory; and "There," he proceeds to state—I quote from memory, for I am ashamed to say that I could never in all my life keep a common place book—"There I did get huge contentment and delight; and more specially from a certain delectable liquor which was called "Bole Ponjis," a drink prepared and wondrously affected by the Moors, and the secret of which the worthy gentlemen of the Factory had won, being the best thing they *could* win, from the heathens aforesaid. Now it was surely a drink most curious and delicate,

being made in this wise; that is to say, with two portions of the spirit called Rak or Arakky, and one portion of fair water, and one portion of the juice of the sugar cane, and one portion of the juice of a little fruit, called in that country of Bengalla, by the Portingals and Moors, limboo, nimboo, or lime. Now truly this compound of five, in the Moors' language, "Paunch," pleasant proportions, did procure for our company, at the Factory of Sootanooty aforesaid, mirth and jollity and great entertainment; and I did mind to bear with me to England the secret of this excellent "Bole Ponjis;" being, methought, as good and savoury as the tobacco carried by Sir Walter Raleigh, Knight, from the Virginias; or as the tea, which hath now in our days been brought from Cathay."

This, friendly or inimical reader, is the veritable history of the first discovery, by civilized man, of that rare composition "Paunch," Anglicæ "Punch,"

the thing of five proportions. "Two of strong and one of weak, one of sour and one of sweet," (according to the old distich,) so wonderfully affected by the infidel Moors, its inventors, who cannot drink wine, and styled by the old voyager "Bole Ponjis," being his version of what his entertainers, at Sootanooty, no doubt called a "Bowl of Punch."

Kind reader, I also have, after my fashion, endeavoured to compound for you "Bole Ponjis." I trust that it may find the same favour in your eyes as the great original found in those of our antique traveller, and not be pronounced wholly unpalatable. But if the weak or the sour should be thought to predominate, and bear an undue proportion to the nobler elements, I can only say with poor Clara Gazul, "*Excusez les fautes de l'auteur.*"

H. M. P.

In the following lines I have attempted nothing in the fashion of the hour,—that is to say, nothing either sentimental, [redacted]

ERRATA.

VOL. I.

Page 1,	Line 14,	for "*gutteral,*"	read "*guttural.*"
,, 2,	,, 3,	for "*bronze,*"	read "*bronzed.*"
,, 59,	,, 16,	for "*Landholm,*"	read "*Lindholm.*"
,, 107,	,, 12,	for "1803,"	read "1802."
,, 311,	,, 1,	for "*add,*"	read "*and.*"

VOL. II.

Page 2,	Line 1,	for "*rose tint sleep,*"	read "*sleeps.*"
,, 197,	,, 14,	for "*lection,*"	read "*selection.*"

In the following lines I have attempted nothing in the fashion of the hour,—that is to say, nothing either sentimental, philanthropical, mystical, metaphysical, or compounded of all four; but simply a rough rhymed Tale, such as the watch on deck might listen to under the weather bulwark of a squally night.

I should like to hear it recited, not by an Opera-house Page in tight silks, having one hand upon her hip, and a cap with a little plume in the other; nor by a Troubadour, all legs and ruff and slashes, with a mandoline, after the method of Troubadours on French clocks; but by an old sea dog from the neighbourhood of Flamborough Head or Holy Island, with a slight *soupçon* of northern gutteral, and a voice like that of the late Mr. Dragonetti's double bass. Humane reader, be pleased to bear this amiable weakness of the author in mind, should you honour him by perusing The Tale of the Buccaneer.

THE TALE OF THE BUCCANEER.

An antique hall on the Coast of Kent. In a gorgeous but gloomy apartment, men richly habited, with fierce bronze features, bearing the marks of strife against the elements and in the battle, sit at a table brilliantly lighted and covered with precious wines, bowls and goblets of crystal, rare China, silver and gold. The master of the mansion relateth.

THE TALE OF THE BUCCANEER.

'Twas in Sixteen hundred and twenty-eight
I left my native banks of Thames
Once more, and shipp'd as Pilot's mate
On board the Royal James;
Her crew were bold, the bark was stout,
At Plymouth she was fitting out,
Twelve demi culverins she bore
With sakers at the stern and prore.

Our captain's name was Montagu,
A gallant heart and seaman true
As ever top-sail furl'd,

In youth with CAVENDISH and DRAKE
Hard blows he learned to give and take,
And twice sail'd round the world;
In manhood's prime he braved the pride
Of Spain, where Plata's troubled tide
With rushing billows breasts the main,
And now once more he sought to gain
Renown upon the western wave.
Brave heart, he found a grave—
Some said that he was harsh and rude,
Psha! 'twas an antient seaman's mood:
Let the soft courtier trim his phrase
For perfumed halls and sunny days,
There's scanty time for silken words
'Midst falling masts, and clashing swords,
Or in a gale, when on the lee
The black rocks scatter the raging sea;
St. George! when I became their choice
They scarce were schooled with gentler voice.
On board the JAMES was a Preston lad
They always called him Lancashire MAY;
Much clerkly lore men said he had,

Well could indite, had wit at will,
Made scurril jests, and then with skill
On the jovial viol could play;
He was a pale and delicate boy,
His widowed mother's joy—
I've heard a dark-robed priest declare
That nothing upon earth was worse
Than a bereaved mother's curse:
But then—how came the stripling there?
It was not I, 'twas fate who gave
That boy an ocean grave.

I know not why—but he hated me,
Perchance 'twas for some blow or two
I gave to make the idler do
His duty steadily;
But ever, when his friends were there,
He'd call me Iron-heart and Bear?
And then with many a trick and mock,
Made me my shipmate's laughing stock,
Till my very dreams embitter'd were

By the biting jests which Lancashire MAY
Did madden me with the live long day.

Yet when I had a cruel fall
From the fore top, he did recall
His jeers and taunts; and as I lay
Maimed in my hammock, day by day
With tales he would beguile the hour
Or on his viol play,
And dress my hurts, and bring me store
Of dainties when he went ashore;
And if my brow should lour,
With many a gentle trick and wile
He won me back to smile.
He said I should regard as air
The idle boyish fooleries
At which my anger used to rise,
For many others did not care
Whom yet he less did spare.
But it was all hypocrisy,
His kindness feigned, his word a lie,
At least—I think—I hope they were,
Yes—yes—they must have been—for when

I to my duty came, again
The wretched stripling made me bear
His cutting wit, which never slept,
Yet once, when I had checked a joke
And spoilt his laughter with a stroke,
He look'd at me, no word he spoke,
But turn'd away and wept.
'Twas cursed seeming—for from thence
From watch to watch, from night to morn,
He ever found some new pretence
For laughing me to scorn.
Oft with my rough rope-harden'd hand
I had crush'd him where he jeering stood,
But by him all his mates would stand,
For he by his viol and fooleries
Gain'd favour in their silly eyes,
And they stay'd my angry mood:
They said he was a stripling still,
And fatherless—a sickly lad;
'Twas false!—it was the cursed skill
To jibe until he drove me mad,
Till black mists o'er my eye-sight came
And my blood ran hot as liquid flame,

That won their gracious will;
They put him on to do what fain
Themselves had done, but that they fear'd;
The traitors! they as soon had dared
To pluck a lion's mane.
The ship was ready—we sailed away,
All high in hope, in spirit gay,
Bound for the Spanish main;
Thence to the coast of rich Peru,
A gallant ship and dauntless crew,
Glory and wealth to gain.
The anchor weighed, the Sound well cleared,
Greetings from battlement and pier
Return'd with many a hearty cheer,
Before the wind we steer'd,
And look'd on England's coast as men
Who ne'er might visit it again:
Some eyes were wet, some hearts were sad,
Not mine—I bless'd the freshening breeze
That bore us towards skies and seas
Bright as the precious ore that shines
In rich Potosi's glorious mines;
My very soul was glad.

Our good ship sail'd as merrily
As ever deer leap'd o'er the lea,
The waves she scatter'd with her prore
Again beneath her stern did roar,
And follow'd us as if in play
Upon our watery way.
Headland and cape we pass'd, and now
The Lizard on our starboard bow
Loom'd dimly through the scud:
For at evening o'er the hard blue sky
The dark clouds mustered rapidly,
And to his rest the sun went down,
Beneath the gathering tempest's frown,
A blazing globe of blood.
Red was the gloomy west as where
Vast Cotopaxi fires the air,
While the purple waves heaved broad and still,
And there was not wind our sails to fill:
Then came light puffs, and then more loud
It whistled through the straining shroud,
Till, as we left the Lizard behind,
It blew a gale, east and by north,
If ever demons visit earth

That hour they rode the wind:
For in the ship's wake all the night
There did play a ghastly light,
Whilst roaring and boiling half mast high
The giant billows, thundering,
And blacker than the raven's wing,
Came wildly rushing by.
Fearing to meet some ship at sea
That stormy night, they station'd me
(A curse upon the chance I say!
It hath been my bane this many a day,)
To look through the drift for sails ahead:
On the spritsail yard I was stationed—
At the larboard arm sat MAY.
Mayhap I might have drank too hard,
But then, the night was bitter cold,
For, as I sate upon the yard,
Wild as the waves that round us roll'd
Rush'd through my mind thoughts how to slay
That lad—that Lancashire MAY.

The wind howl'd loud, and the sea roar'd by,
Ha! but my grasp was more fierce and rude

Than the cutting blast or the boiling flood!
The fiends who sail'd through the troubled sky
Laugh'd as I tore the ropes away
From the desperate clutch of MAY;
For mercy he did pray and yell,
But his voice was lost in the rushing blast,
He might have pray'd to that as well,
For I smote his head till his hands let go—
His body flash'd in the foam below—
The good ship over him pass'd.
When he was gone I laugh'd outright,
But, by the sword I wear!
My laugh was echoed strong and clear
Through the gloom and sleet of that wild night
Though not a soul was near:
Then a hot blast quivered o'er my face
And the storm was still'd for a moment's space;
The blood went rushing to my heart
But mine was ne'er a coward's part,
So I cursed the laughers scornfully,
And again the gale came howling by.

'Twas well it did, for our ship roll'd hard
And sprang her foremast; on the deck

Down crashing came rope, block, and yard,
And that I live this tale to tell
Is little short of miracle,
For the bowsprit too was carried away,
And all hands deemed that Lancashire MAY
Had perished with the wreck.

As for me, I thought of the fool no more;
The gale cleared up, fine breezes blew,
Before their breath our good ship flew
Skimming the waves like a brave sea-mew,
And ere we reach'd the golden shore
I say I thought of MAY no more;
Save that at times some silly dreams
Would cross my sleep, as rain-fed streams
Pour down a rugged mountain's face
Of stormy nights, but leave no trace
By day-light of their race—
But hah! he thought of *me*, Aye there,
Glaring all ghastly at me now
He stands beside the black oak chair
Beneath yon archway's dusky brow:
What! dost thou think my cheek is pale,

Dost think my steady glance will quail
Because I smote a hind like thou?

Away! or else—see, see it fades,
'Tis ever thus he fears to try
The grapple of mine agony;
Still he my desperate clutch evades,
But thus by wearying he would rule
A mind which scorns him utterly
Dead or alive—Presumptuous fool!
I slew him—well his betters too
Have felt what this right hand can do.

But still I know not how or why
The cursed sprite hath mighty power
And mastery o'er my lonely hour;
For when I see this MAY float by
Bloody and swoll'n, what time the bell
From the old church doth midnight tell,
And the chill blast comes whistling round
My bed, and wakes me with the sound,

If *then* I meet his cold dead eye,
I cannot brave the dreary form
As when my blood with wine is warm,
As when the blessed day shines bright,
Or wassail wakes the night.
But to my tale—more wine there, ho!
And lights—but not my mates d'ye see
That I do fear mine enemy,
But I love to see the Xeries flow,
And lights inspire jollity:
Then give us lights, and wine there, ho!

The tale that I shall tell you now
Is true as e'er was seaman's vow
Given to a dying mate—Aye true
As was a heart which once I knew,
Which once perchance was—fire and death!
I say my tale though wild is TRUE,
And he who questions it may rue
The licence given to his breath,
On this nor jest nor jibe I bear;
Ye know me—mark me—and beware!

You need not now be told how we
Cruized on those coasts for five rich years,
A crew of dauntless Buccaneers,
The terror of the Indian Sea?
Nor how the ballast in our hold
Was cochineal and silk and gold;
Nor need I say how toil and blows,
Given and borne by sea or land,
Whilst clearing decks with pike in hand,
Or plunging reckless amidst foes
When the black embrasure was won
While yet its own recoiling gun
Had shrouded it in smoke-wreaths dun,
Earn'd me the charge to which I rose:
But when the Royal James did take
Close to the Porto Bello shore
The bark of war El Salvador,
(We named her after Drake,)
Of that stout ship our gallant band
Assign'd me the command.

It was in June when days are fair
And nights are short, my cruizer lay

Behind a sandy isle which there
They call a Key—It was, I say
A sandy isle of herbage bare,
With scarce a weed, or stick, or stone,
To checquer with its shade the glare
That o'er the hot broad sand was thrown.

We waited for an Argosay,
Laden with quicksilver from Spain
And bound to Carthagena's bay,
Nor waited we in vain.
She came, but not alone, for fear
Had whispered of the Buccaneer,
And three stout galleys manned for fight
Hove with our destined prize in sight.
That day it chanced that I had gone
To wander on the Key,
Idly to pick up shell or stone,
Or yet more listlessly
To watch the white clouds float away,
Or listen to the dashing spray
Where the waves broke in a little bay;
I was left there alone.

The day was hot; I slept, and then
I had a dream, I knew not what,
All was confused, the shouts of men
Were mingled with the roar of shot,
And then the jeering laugh of MAY
Seem'd louder than the thick'ning fray,
Till the boatswain's pipe upon mine ear
Smote shrill, and strong, and clear.
I woke, I sprang upon my feet,
One glance! 'twas death! I saw the DRAKE
Light as the swallow on a lake
Hugging the wind, and in her wake
On drove the Spanish fleet.

I saw my fate, and one deep groan
Came in my own despite,
But an English heart was still my own,
And as I watch'd the fight,
And mark'd the flash of every gun
Whose smoke-wreath like a spreading plume
Roll'd crimson o'er the setting sun,
And saw the red cross flag on high,

And heard my crew cheer gallantly,
I thought not of my doom.
But dim and dim the ships became,
And, as they bore away,
More faintly glanced the cannon's flame,
Like the expiring ray
Of a lone torch flash in the aisle
Of some cathedral's dusky pile,
Till all was lost in the thickening gloom
That spread around my sea-girt tomb.

The night came on, the breezes slept
Upon the silent sea,
The shadow of thick darkness crept
Dream-like o'er it and me.
The foamless billows rose and fell
Unbroken and invisible,
And there was scarce a sound to say
How near the still dark ocean lay.
Methought, but yet it could not be,
I heard a heavy deep-toned bell
Sound faint and far across the sea:
'Twas like a dead man's knell.

'Twas strange that I at such a time
Should think upon my native clime
More than upon my fate, which seem'd
But as a thing of which I dream'd;
Perchance it was, I cannot tell,
The fancied sound of that far bell;
For just with such a tone the hour
Of prayer rang from mine own church tower,
When its sweet solemn call was borne
On the still breath of sabbath morn
O'er sunny hill, and lake, and wood,
To those I since have learnt to scorn,
Yet once I thought them good:
But so it was—before my eyes,
In the silvery light which most adorns
The earliest of her autumn morns,
Came England's fields and skies.
In vain I struggled to control
The thoughts of other days,
Which glanced across my darken'd soul
As do the morning rays
That shew some sinking crew the beach
They've left no more to reach.

At length, desponding and unmann'd,
I sank upon the soft warm sand,
And heard with silent agony
The surf that sadly murmur'd round,
Seeming with voice unceasingly
To say, and in the dreary sound
Was woe, and misery, and fear,
" Thy place and thy tomb are here."

Suddenly from the south there came
A little star of quivering flame
And floated on the waves:
It burnt a pale and ghastly white,
But faintly, as the meteor light
That glimmers above graves.
At first I thought that it might be
The lanthorn of some bark at sea,
And cursed the darkness of the night
That weigh'd like lead upon my sight.
But soon the star rose far too high,
And seem'd to swim in that ebon sky
Above the silent Key,

My breath came thick, as with aching eye
I watch'd it eagerly.
As yet I fix'd on it my gaze
Around it spread a crimson haze,
And in the lurid glare it cast
Upon the desolate sand,
It seem'd as if dim figures past,
And one appeared to stand;
A silent, dark, and shadowy thing,
Faint as the sea foam's wreath
That flies before the tempest's wing,
I said, "Can this be death?"
And look'd till on my dizzy ear
There came a wild laugh shrill and clear
As on that night of tempests when—
I need not speak of it again—
Then closed my eyes for very fear,
And as my face upon the ground
I press'd, I heard a heavy groan.
Methought I knew the dismal tone
But dared not look around;
For it came from where that shadow stood
In its appalling solitude.

Had it but ta'en a form, I still
Had dared the worst, come good, come ill,
But 'twas the shapeless shade,
So dim, so silent, and so drear,
That on a heart unused to fear
With a deep horror weigh'd.
I own it then, I trembling lay
Till that dread night had pass'd away.
Oh how I bless'd the day!

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The morning dawn'd, but with it came
A sky that seem'd one sheet of flame,
Athwart whose burning lustre roll'd
Clouds black as midnight fring'd with gold.
There was not a breath to stir the sea
Or the lightest sand on that lone Key;
The gossamers fell from the air
To earth, and lay unruffled there;
Yet the dark swell heaved wild and high
Between me and the eastern sky,
Where the sun swam in blood,
And cast a shadow deep as night

When moon and stars withhold their light
On the sea-beach where I stood.

At noon across the heavens spread
A stifling haze of dusky red,
Through which the sun glanced dim,
And whiter than the moon which gleams
In winter upon frozen streams,
While round its broken rim
Spread circle beyond circle pale
Portentous of the coming gale.
Then came the sea-birds sweeping by,
All screaming with affright;
Oh how I wished, as they flew nigh,
To join their clamorous flight,
Though but to perish in the storm;
'Twere better than the dreadful lot
Which bound me to that haunted spot
And that drear shadowy form.
Thicker and thicker came the birds
Clustering in their deep fear,
As do in Indian fields the herds
When a tiger's growl they hear;

As if to mock them, flitting brave
The flying fish glanced o'er the wave,
But in their deep dismay
The sea-birds, fast as the thick air
Their wild despairing flight would bear,
Flew heedless of their prey;
Regardless too of my lone Key
Though offering rest beneath the lee;
Perchance they saw, though I could not,
All mustered on that dreary spot
Its awful company.

At length—but I cannot declare
The horrors of that day,
And dreadful night of mad despair
I passed upon the Key;
That day and night of mortal fear,
Which seem'd an age of agony,
Turn'd my black air to grey.
I wish'd, oh how I wish'd for death!
And yet, whene'er my sobbing breath
Drew in the salt foam of the wave
That thunder'd on the sand,

I felt as if there stretch'd to save
My life some giant hand;
And when the hurricane to earth
My bruised frame would dash
Another gust, as if in mirth,
Lifted me till the wash
Of the salt sea just reach'd my lip,
And thus I seem'd condemned to sip
Slowly of death's drear cup, though I
Strove, as for life, that I might die.

Twice when a vaster billow came,
Like a hill of molten lead
With a gleaming fringe of silver flame,
High, high above my head,
I rush'd to meet it, but in vain,
It flung me on the shore again,
And left me gasping, worn, yet still
Alive to misery and ill.

At last, exhausted by the strife,
I struggled not for death or life;

A thousand lights before my eyes
Danced in their fiery phantasies,
A thousand sounds rung in mine ear,
And the earth seem'd reeling here and there:
Faint, dizzy, prostrate on the ground,
Yet dimly conscious, like to one
Who knows while in a speechless swound
The things around him done,
I lay and gazed upon the sea,
And there beheld, or dreamed I saw,
A sight surpassing nature's law,
But yet so spent and worn I was,
So heedless what might come to pass,
It scarce surprised me.
As oft as the broad lightning flung
Its banner to the blast,
And the huge waves which o'er me hung
A blacker shadow cast,
Ever I saw a little boat,
Where for an instant's space
No human bark could hope to float,
Steer'd full against the furious storm,

When war's excitement, all has gone,
Leaving him weary, sad, and lone.
But I had more my frame to wear,
Hunger and thirst with all their pangs
Deep in my breast had fixed their fangs,
Though they were light to my despair.
I rushed towards the placid sea
To terminate my agony,
And find beneath its sleeping wave
By one bold plunge a grave.
I paused, 'twas with no human fear,
But, by the blessed light of day!
I saw beneath the moonshine clear
Gliding across the glassy sea,
Silent and dim, and rapidly
As the scud which rolls before the blast
When heels the ship and bends the mast,
The ghastly form of MAY.

I rubb'd my eyes, and strove in vain
To think 'twas a distempered brain
That trick'd with forms my weaken'd sight,
Both now and on the bygone night;

I tried a rude sea rhyme to sing,
And though I strove for hardihood
Yet still I felt, aye heard, my blood
Rush through my veins in an icy flood,
Whilst my throat and lips were parched and dry
As his at the stake when the flames rise high.
Had a sea-gull brush'd me with his wing
I had fallen on the shining sand,
For I trembled so I scarce could stand.

At length so nigh the spirit came
Desperate I hail'd him by his name,
With the seaman's wont, What cheer there, Ho!
Then MAY look'd at me drearily,
With lustreless and glassy eye,
And pointed to the sea below.
I was not one whom he could brave,
Although he dared me to a grave—
A grave! 'twas what I sought, but I—
Now mark my tale—I could not die.
I plunged, but not one stifled breath
Gave warning of the coming death;

No gasp, no struggle, but as clear
And calm my respirations were,
My eye as true, my limbs as free,
As if on some green hill I stood,
Or in the breezy solitude
Of my own native lea.

I plunged, we sank—the moonlight sea
Closed over us, a canopy
To those cold coral groves and caves
A thousand fathoms 'neath its waves,
Through which I felt strange power to glide
After my dim and awful guide.
Onward we went, I know not how,
Amongst the vallies of the deep
Where motionless the waters sleep
Though far above tornado's blow.
And down in those strange realms below
The light came very pale, but clear
As through an emerald atmosphere,
Or as the dawn of a winter's day;
And shadows rose and passed away
Of many a shapeless thing which glides

Beneath the mystic ocean's tides
Seeking its destined prey.

And mighty weeds like forest oaks
Far, far and wide, their branches spread,
Clasping, with slimy roots, the rocks
Of snowy coral and of red;
While shells of every lovely hue
Were clustered on each mighty bough,
The fruit and flowers they which grow
Beneath the ocean blue.
The purple grape's imperial dye,
The cherry's red, the apple's green,
Profusely mixed, and bright between
Grew corallines, whose tints might vie
With any that on earth are seen;
The rich geranium's scarlet glare,
Rose, tulip, and carnation rare,
Mingled in bright confusion there.
But still the wavering light was cold,
For faintly came the moonshine fair
Through the green sea that o'er us rolled;

To me its chill and pallid beams
Seem'd like the sunlight of our dreams.

Nor lack'd that forest living things
Wild in its sunless depths to roam,
I heard the sea-snake's thunderings,
As crashing through the boughs he came,
And met his eye of flame;
There too the baleful cuttle's home
Is marked with wrecks of barks which he
Hath seized and dragged down suddenly,
When not a ripple stirs the sea
And the ship's track leaves no foam.
Wide waved his thousand arms and high
As I and my ghastly guide drew nigh,
But when we nearer came they sunk,
And floated round the shapeless trunk
Like giant sea-weeds, many a rood
Slow undulating on the flood.
And still across our fearful path
Came many a grim yet shapeless form
Like clouds of a dispersing storm,
And seem'd to glare on me in wrath,

But ever as they look'd on MAY
With shuddering haste they shot away.

On, on we glided, smooth as snow
Slides from some hoary iceberg's brow.
Sometimes we settled down as deep
As ever in a fevered sleep
A dreamer seemed to fall,
And then through vast and solemn caves,
Each one a whirlpool's sounding hall
Hollowed and columned by its waves,
And lighted by that phosphor gleam
With which the midnight breakers stream,
We swept like thought.—From thence again
Uprising buoyantly so high
That I heard the murmur of the main,
Could hear the Petrel's quick shrill cry,
Aye, see him dip to clutch his prey;
But he marked us with his glittering eye,
And screaming fled away.

But most of all 'twas strange to view,
And 'tis a proof that I was sane,

And not distempered in my brain,
Which oft my comrades would maintain
Until I almost thought 'twas true;
I say 'twas strange to see the shade
Of many a gallant vessel bent
Upon a voyage of war or trade,
As on her way she went.
At first in moonlight's silver gleam
They pass'd like clouds across a stream,
But as the day broke broad and clear
And filled with light earth, sea, and air
I saw them, floating as it were,
Far off, a thousand fathoms high
In a crystalline and sunny sky,
Aye, rigg'd in all their bravery;
I marked some well from keel to vane,
And since I've met with them again;
One lies at Sandwich, she they call
The old St. George, a caraval;
Then she was on a voyage, men say
Beyond the Naze of Noroway.

At length from out the deep we came,
May gliding ghastly on before,
Ice, snow, and icebergs formed the shore,
Above, the heavens were all aflame,
For o'er the black but starry sky
The northern lights streamed gloriously,
Flickering upon that world of snow
Which lay so dead below.

Fountains of fire, they sparkled on,
Flooding the darkness with a tide
Of amethystine light, then changed,
And burning pennons glitter'd wide
Beneath the stars—Anon they ranged
In diamond showers, while arch, and zone,
And blazing swords, seemed flashing bright
Through the startled depths of the polar night,
Then soft as summer twilight died.

And still we glided on—around
Lay many a frozen lake and hill,
Where time had passed without a sound
To wake the echoes dead and chill,

Or stir the thick and icy air
Which silently stagnated there.
Onwards we passed 'midst giant waves
Fixed by interminable frost,
Or scooped into fantastic caves,
Or tossed in peaks, with summits lost
In the shifting light of that dazzling heaven,
And some appear'd by lightning riven,
The ruins of a shatter'd world
Down from some sunless system hurled.
So loose the ice rocks hung, a breath
Had dashed them on the mass beneath,
But we glided by like a voiceless blast
And the crags but wavered as we passed.

At length my dreary guide stood still,
And then I heard that whistle shrill,
Though very faint and low,
With which the hardy boatswain calls
All hands on deck for sudden squalls
Or dangers on the bow:
I heard it faintly answered—then
From every icy dell and glen,

From every ice-cleft gaping wide,
From every iceberg's glimmering side,
From every frozen cavern's mouth,
From east, from west, from north from south,
Sprang horrid forms, dry bones and bare
That rattled in the icy air;
Until at length around me spread
A multitude of hideous things,
Now seen, now lost, in light or shade,
As bright or dim the glimmerings
Of the fantastic north-lights played,
The fleshless tombless dead.
I know not how, but as they stood
I felt that each grim skeleton
Was unannealed from murder done,
Had spilt a messmate's blood;
And this the place of penalty
For them, perhaps doom'd to be for me.
Danger from man I feared as one,
Who dwells in Lapland fears the sun:
I've stood unshrinking on a wreck,
Till plank by plank the bursting deck

Hath parted from beneath my feet;
I've stood unmoved amidst the sleet
Of poisoned arrows in the shade
Of the fierce Carib's ambuscade;
I've braved the Arab's fiery zeal,
The Indian's club, the Spaniard's steel,
And a more deadly trial still
Where met the might of this fierce land
English with English, hand to hand,
At NASEBY'S bloody hill:
I say, 'midst living foes I've stood
Unshaken, as *you* know full well,
As is the Mew-stone by the swell
Of the Atlantic's flood;
But those wild forms that waver'd there
Beneath the north-light's flickering glare,
Those were no things of mortal mould;
They were gaunt bones, all stiff and cold,
Yellow and stained as with charnel mould,
And they grinned upon me where we met
With eyeless sculls—I see them yet.

'Twas but a moment, then I mann'd
My heart to face the grisly band;
And with that hardihood that still
Had borne me on, as doth the bark
In sunny calm or tempest dark
Bear her rich freight through good and ill,
Half daring, half in my despair
I spoke, while every word I said
Seem'd to fall out on that still air
As heavily as lead:—
My mates, if living man may be
Mate to this ghastly company,
It is the wont of seamen true
When in some distant land
A shipmate old, or comrade new,
Is added to their band,
Ever, with what carouse and cheer
The ship can best afford,
The bravest wine, the daintiest fare,
To welcome him on board;
Have ye no demon revelry
To greet a messmate true like me?

I starve—and were you hell's worst brood
I'd join your crew for food.
I paused, and then from those gaunt bones
Awoke a dreary wail,
Like to a rising tempest's moans
Through block and shroud and sail,
Mingled, it seemed, with dying groans:
It was to give me hail.

Then sudden rose, and yet I know
Not how, from out the silvery snow,
A flower-wreath'd and gilded board
With garnitures of rare device,
Dainties, and richest wine of price,
Delicious fruits and rare, piled up
In many a gold and crystal cup,
And luscious viands stored:
I rush'd as famish'd wolves they say,
Or hungry sharks dash on their prey,
When quick as passing light
All vanish'd, and instead there lay
Upon a bier the corpse of MAY
To blast my aching sight.

There lay the body—by its side,
Staring on me with glittering eye,
Where yet was death's drear vacancy,
Stood up my ghastly guide.
I look'd around, and would have given
My hopes—such hopes as mine—of Heaven,
To see about me those grim forms
Who my drear welcome gave
To that dark land of fear and storms,
Though tenants of the grave:
But they had vanish'd, and alone
I stood by these two horrid things,
Worse than fear's worst imaginings;
I seem'd to turn to stone.

Anon the spirit vanish'd too,
And then uprose the dead,
All stark, and gaunt, and stiff to view,
With flesh and lips of livid blue,
And swollen hands, and starting eyes
That flash'd beneath the flashing skies;
He look'd a man of lead.

He came towards me, and with drear
But well-remember'd voice
Said, "Messmate, once again what cheer,
"Does Iron-heart rejoice
"To see so old and proved a friend
"Whose friendship now will scarcely end?
"For like thy shadow, from your side
"Inseparable will I glide:
"In thy stout ship, in bower, in hall,
"In battle, or in festival,
"Be sure that I am near;
"Alike when night-storms are abroad
"Or mid-day sunshine lights thy road,
"By eve as by daylight clear."

He spoke, and twice I strove to gain
My hardihood of heart;
Twice I essay'd reply in vain,
My parch'd lips would not part;
Famine had clung me, and that drear
Communion with the dead,
I know not what it was, but fear
O'ercame me then—as MAY drew near

I turn'd away and fled.
I fled in vain, not e'en despair
Might strengthen limbs thus numb and worn,
Or raise a spirit so forlorn;
My feeble steps could scarcely bear
Me onward, and as through the snow
I stagger'd tottering, and slow,
It seemed to me as if around
Each foot an iron chain was bound;
Yet how I wish'd to fly, for then
Arose a rushing noise as when
In some lone vale the fitful breeze
Of winter sighs through leafless trees;
I felt myself to be pursued
By all that fearful multitude,
While nearer still one footstep fell
In the crisp snow, I knew it well;
I knew it—to his promise tied
I felt that HE was by my side.
And since that hour, where'er I move
On the plank'd deck, or grassy hill,
In festal hall, or lonely grove,

To mine sounds full, and strong, and clear,
Though to no other living ear,
That fatal footstep still.
At last I felt the struggle vain,
My eyes grew dark, fail'd heart and limb,
Around me all things seem'd to swim,
While dizzy noises fill'd my brain;
But I had gain'd the green-sea's shore,
I heard the breakers lash the strand,
And hoped to rise in life no more
As I sank upon the sand.

I woke to sense—and—could it be,
Or was it some strange fantasy?
I was in mine own ship once more,
Around I heard the billows pour,
And plash and gurgle 'gainst her side
As the bold vessel cleft the tide:
And near about my hammock stood,
Friends, rude indeed, but true as rude;
My own brave band, who ne'er hung back
When my keen sword pointed the way
To glory, vengeance, or a prey,

Tho' death glared on the bloody track.
Once, once again, my ear could catch
The footsteps of the wakeful watch
Pacing the planks above my head,
Oh there was that in their firm tread
A sense of human neighbourhood,
Which warm'd to life my frozen blood!

Soon told my gallant crew their tale;
They had maintained a running fight
Against the Spaniard through that night
And the next day; then came the gale,
The fierce breath of the hurricane
That scattered far the fleet of Spain,
While shattered mast and riven sail
Detain'd the DRAKE, as to search for me
They beat towards that lonely Key.
Six days pass'd by, they scarcely dared
To hope that I was living, when
They anchor'd by its shores again;
And when they found me they despair'd;
For I was gaunt, and pale, and wan,
And feebler than a dying child,

A skeleton and not a man,
Yet with mine eye-balls glaring wild,
And raving, 'neath the burning sun,
Of fearful things I had seen afar
By the chill light of the polar star,
And deeds by dead men done.

Days, weeks, pass'd by, and very slow
Came back my life-blood's healthful flow,
And still did I relapse and rave
Of my wild voyage beneath the wave
By many a coral precipice,
And of that silent realm of ice,
Its fiery sky and frozen air
And the ghastly forms that muster'd there;
But as I spoke my comrades still
Soothed me with kindness and good will,
And ever strove to make me deem
The whole was but a frightful dream,
Born of my sufferings, they said,
Of horrid thirst, and hunger keen,
And burning sunshine on my head;

Nor would believe that I had seen
The shadowy terrific land
Where the dry bones walk hand in hand,
And I was mocked at by the dead.

Long did they reason, till I too
Began to think their reasonings true.
I strove, nor always strove in vain,
To deem 'twas but an o'erwrought brain,
And utter solitude, and pain,
That conjured up each frightful scene
In which, unnatural and drear,
Yet for a dream how hideous clear,
I had an actor been.

At last I re-assumed my stand
Upon the deck, and my command.
Oh! it was bliss once more to see
The emerald waves so fresh and free;
Again to watch the snowy sail
Distended by the tropic gale;
To mark the hardy Albacore
Swim stoutly by the plunging prore,

Or out the wave upspringing high
Startle the sea-gull soaring nigh,
While from each billow's foaming curl
Forth rushed the winged fish, and flew
Beneath the tropic sky's deep blue
In clouds of living pearl.

To muster Ho! the chief commands,
Boatswain, to muster pipe all hands:
Quick through the ship the summons rung,
As quick my hardy seamen sprung
From top, from hatchway, and from shroud,
And as I heard them trample loud
Upon the deck, and saw those forms
Inured to battles and to storms,
I felt my heart was proud.
A hundred—thirty—thirty-two,
All hands are here, the tally's true.
But hold—who sits as if on guard
Far out upon the spritsail yard?
I've seen such things when with the night
Came the dark channel-fog and sleet,
And we might fear some ship to meet;

But here, the tropic noon is bright,
And from the topmast head no sail
Glances beneath the sunbeams pale;
No rock, no island is in sight
Within the clear horizon's range,
Nor sits he as with line and grange
Though the Bonita shoal just now
Were sporting underneath our bow—
You see him not?—'tis very strange—
You see him not?—can none but me
That solitary figure see?—

Less resolute my footstep fell
As moving to the forecastle
I near'd that seaman; I who ne'er
Of mortal man knew awe or fear
Felt my blood thrill, my spirit quailed,
Till in despite and very shame
To find my heart so cowed, so tame,
That form upon the yard I hail'd.
Silent it turn'd to me, and there,
Full in the tropic sun's white ray,

That dazzled with its mid-day glare
In that resplendent atmosphere,
More palpable than when at first
Upon my shrinking sight he burst,
By hell's dark depths sat MAY!

And since that hour from time to time,
Alike in morning's sunny prime,
As when the stars look forth from high,
Or night-clouds curtain in the sky;
Alike when spring makes fair the fields
In summer, or when autumn yields
Its glorious fruits and golden grain,
Cumbering the farmer's massive wain,
As when the blast of winter raves
O'er groaning woods and frozen waves,
This sprite will steal on me, and glare
Into mine eyes with lifeless stare,
Yet with a horrid meaning there
That seems to check the vital flood
And turn to very ice my blood.
Wine, wine alone, and wassail free,

The flowing cup, the blaze of light,
That dazzles the dim eye of night,
Revel, and song, and jollity,
And stout companions by my side,
Arm me these visits to abide:
Arm me to gaze, as I do now,
Steadily on his lifeless brow—
For there he stands, unseen by all
But me, beside yon casement tall,
Through which the setting moonbeams cast
A light, while o'er the ancient glass
The shadows of the dark trees pass
As they bend beneath the blast.

* * * * * * * *

And now, my mates, you know why I
Do hate to sit in this old hall
Alone, while dreary winds moan by,
And the dull rain-drops patteringly
Against the casement fall;
Or wander through its deep woods when
Autumn's hoarse breezes sweep the glen,

Stripping the red trees with their breath,
And rattling the seer leaves beneath.
To-morrow sees me quit once more
The haunted quiet of the shore,
Sees me again give to the gale
My pennant and my flowing sail,
And seek midst tempests, and in strife,
Relief from those drear visitings
Which every lonely moment brings
Until I loath my life.
The flag of Holland braves the breeze
Presumptuous in the narrow seas,
While English hearts, from near and far,
The bold Protector's call obey,
And gather in their proud array
To dare the ocean war.
There, where the battle-tempest pours
Its iron rain, the broadside's flash
Is answer'd by the deaf'ning crash
Of reeling ships, while darkly lours
On the calmed deep the stifling cloud
That wraps the combat in its shroud;

There, in the soul-absorbing game
Whose stake is life, whose prize is fame,
Where every mortal energy
Is task'd to bravely live or die,
I may a stormy respite find
From that which harasses my mind,
And in the whirlwind of the fight
Forget this hateful spright.

* * * * * * * *

He went—he fiercely fought and fell
At that great battle when the swell
Of the green channel turned to red,
And broke in blood off Portland Head;
When the Batavian's banner sunk
Beneath the fiery charge of MONK,
And victory followed in the wake
Of thy bold fleet, heroic BLAKE.
He fell—and scarce a moment's space
He found to frame one prayer for grace;
But those on board did say,
That when beneath the shattered mast

He lay, while from his mangled side
The life-blood pour'd its crimson tide,
He murmur'd, as his spirit pass'd,
" Take, take that cold dead hand away;
" He grasps my throat,—'tis MAY."

A BOTTLE OF RED INK.

A BOTTLE OF RED INK.

We have heard of the victims of pleasure, of love, of glory, of ambition; men have fallen by open violence, and by the secret assassin; some have cast off this world, and periled their chance of a better, with the assistance of a bottle of laudanum; but—good heavens! will it be believed—I was cut off in the spring of my days, when the charms of life were all upon the surface of its current, and I knew not of the poisoned weeds and loathsome things that lurked below; I was cut off, I say, in the green and sunny period of my existence, by—how shall I state a fact so ludicrous in sound, so terrible in reality—by *A Bottle of Red Ink!*

A man who has died in a certain way may fairly assume the privilege of styling himself the late unfortunate Mr. So-and-so; the fact of his decease is a matter of historical notoriety, which can usually be attested by some thousands of reputable witnesses. I then, gentle

reader, am the late unfortunate Mr. Rudiger Holstein, who ceased to exist at Gottingen, on the 24th of January, 1803. You may imagine, probably, that you are now perusing the lucubrations of a disembodied spirit, that my periods smell of the grave, and my phraseology smacks of the charnel-house; but, courteous reader, of my true history entertain no such absurd notion. Little have the dead to do with autobiography; for though occasionally the subjects of very brilliant memoirs in two volumes quarto, the worms, to whose appetite *they* administer are certainly not bookworms, neither do they personally enlighten mankind, beyond the meteor or two which exhales from their coffin to ignite in the dull atmosphere stagnating round the tomb. You are not, therefore, gentle, or ungentle, reader, throwing away your valuable time and attention on the history of a ghost, written by himself. No, in spite of my untimely end, here I sit alive and in perfect contentment this present 11th day of September, 1830, in my neat blue parlour which overlooks the tranquil Hudson, and the pleasant little village of New Harton. From my bay window, whose light is chequered by waving honeysuckle and clematis, while they fling their delicious

fragrance through its open panes, I gaze on a charming landscape ruddy with the glories of an early American autumn. The balmy air of the sunny afternoon brings from afar the sweetest sounds that can be associated with rural scenery: the tinkle of the sheep-bell, the low of cattle, the murmur of the distant water-mill, the cheerful jingle which accompanies the passing team, and now and then the remote sound of the clanking hammer from the village smithy. But, dearer to a father's heart, there is the cheerful laugh, the merry shout of my bright-eyed children as they chase the shaggy and sagacious Bronte round the rose bushes of my trim garden. My wife, with "Anne of Geierstein," our last arrival, in her hand, watches the cradled sleep of my latest born, while I assume my pen, to record the most distressing event of my life; as distressing, indeed, as aught could be unaccompanied by dishonour. I allude, of course, to the disagreeable accident at which I have already hinted. It is a weakness to feel ashamed, or afraid to mention the subject more unequivocally; a weakness that I have often vanquished—that I will not now allow to conquer me. I allude, then, to my having been hanged—hanged for the murder of Stephen George Blumenfield, only son

of the Assistant Deputy Electoral Mining Inspector Resident at Karleschaffe.

Blumenfield and myself were fellow-students in the Georgia Augusta. We entered together, and of course passed together through the various degrees of Fochs, Brand Fochs, Junger Bursch, and Alter Bursche; another semester would have conferred on both the dignity of Goldner Fochs, when the lamentable event to which I have adverted cut short my friend's career in this world, and mine at the university of Gottingen. We resided at No. 11, the Hatmaker's in the Linden Street, and as we lived together in very good fellowship, so did we unite very heartily in our scandals and renownings, in our commerzen and riding parties, and alas! to our mutual sorrow, in falling in love with the pretty Bertha Landholm, the daughter of our principal Natural Philosophy Professor. Yes, she was very pretty; and even now, my beloved Bertha, I would not change that mild kind face of thine, as thou sittest unconscious of my gaze, with thy bright hair and beautiful profile thrown clearly out by the silvery light of our autumn atmosphere, for the loveliest that Raphael ever conceived, or Vandyke ever copied.

Blumenfield was a true German; mystical, melancholy, honest, cold in demeanour, but concealing fire under frost. To such a man unrequited love was an enduring misery. Bertha loved me, but Blumenfield did not hate me; he was too high-minded and generous. "You have taken no unfair advantage, Rudiger," he used to say: "Bertha must have preferred one, and that she prefers my friend, almost reconciles me to my own disappointment." Nevertheless, he was *not* reconciled; he became moody, and at times, in defiance of very magnanimous efforts to conquer feelings so foreign to his nature, morose. In the meanwhile, my friends and Bertha's father had consented to our union at the end of the semester, and I was almost glad that they had postponed our marriage till that period, as I knew Blumenfield contemplated a long tour during the vacation, which would remove him, for some months, from Gottingen.

It was on the 20th of December, the day before the commencement of the vacation: I had passed the entire morning at Doctor Lindholm's, and was engaged to return to his house in the evening to join one of those friendly intellectual meetings which then formed the

charm of the University, and at which men, eminent in every branch of science and literature, delighted to assist. I remember the day well, and in truth I have good cause. It was raw and gusty; frequent showers of snow had fallen, and a boisterous wind swept sullenly through the leafless limes in the Linden Street, whirling the snow up in cutting drifts and sighing mournfully through the long branches of the ancient trees. Overhead was a canopy of dark grey clouds, tossed together in disorder and looking more gloomy from the opposition of the high white roofs of the houses which were loaded with snow. I hurried home, and as usual, on my arrival, inquired if any notes or letters had been brought during my absence. The reply was, only one by the Post which I should find on my table. That letter was the cause—but I will not anticipate. Taking my light from old Margaret, a kind of bed-maker or charwoman to the students lodging in the house, I proceeded to my own apartment; and after placing my evening habiliments near the stove, I read the letter which was lying on my desk: it required an immediate reply, but on my preparing to write one, I found that either my own carelessness, or that of another, had overset my ink, and that

I was destitute of that essential agent in the production of an epistle. This was vexatious, because I was not inclined to be pleased with any delay which detained me from Bertha; however, the letter must be answered if possible—the post was going off in a quarter of an hour, and I had nothing left but to crave the loan of the indispensible from one of my fellow-students. Our house was one of those old-fashioned mansions very common in the German University towns, where a square central courtyard is surrounded by the dwelling, and overhung by galleries into which the several apartments open. Three of the latter, in addition to the rooms tenanted by Blumenfield and myself, were occupied by students, and I had knocked at each door without success, before I recollected that a grand commerz of their landmanship was held by a distinguished Bursch, their absence from which would have been considered as an affront, even if they themselves would not have deemed the loss of a deep carouse a severe affliction. Blumenfield's room was but on the other side of the gallery, yet I felt a reluctance to apply there, as of late I could not fail to perceive that my presence seemed to agitate him; I therefore turned down the

stair near my own door, with a view to supply myself with whatever composition the people of the house might dignify with the title of Ink, and had reached the bottom of the flight, when it occurred to me that I had to deliver to Blumenfield a message from Professor Neuhuller, relative to a certificate of attendance at the geological class which it was necessary for him to possess. Instead of returning by the gallery, and so losing time, I hastened straight across the courtyard, from which ascended another staircase, leading up directly to the door of my friend's apartment. The snow had ceased, but the courtyard was deeply covered with the exception of the black circular mouth of the well nearly under that quarter of the gallery to which I was proceeding. On mounting to Blumenfield's door I found it ajar, notwithstanding the coldness of the weather; and when I entered his room, I could scarcely see whether it was occupied or not; for the short deep twilight of winter had now set in, and there was no light in the apartment beyond that produced by the embers glowing through the open door of the stove. The voice of my friend, however, speedily assured me of his presence, as

he said, from the sofa where he was lying, "That is you, Holstein."

"It is," I replied. "But in the name of the Hartz demon, Stephen, how do you recognise me in this Cimmerian darkness?"

"By heaven," he answered, with a hoarse voice, "I would know your footfall now amongst a million. There is a devil at my ear, Rudiger, who whispers me a thousand strange secrets, that till now I knew not; he is the devil of envy or jealousy; but he has taught me to hear your footstep when you are dancing a mile off, with—you know whom: to hear your voice as you whisper in her ear, and to see you at her father's although there is the long Linden Street, and the depth of two hundred house walls between us."

"For heaven's sake, Blumenfield," said I, "struggle against this weakness."

"Struggle against it!" he answered loud and fiercely, at the same time springing up and advancing, while his tall figure looked like a darker shadow in the dusky glimmer, which barely rendered it visible. "Struggle against it! you know not, Holstein, with what I con-

tend; but it cannot last, it shall not last. No, Rudiger, the pathway of your bridal will be over a new-made grave." With these words he turned hastily from me, and entering the small inner apartment flung the door to with a violence that made the old room shake. Much as I grieved for the state of mind which had wrought so melancholy a change in the kind-hearted and quiet Blumenfield, I felt that it was in vain for me to reason with him *now*, and that any attempt at consolation might only add to the irritability under which he suffered, and of which I was the principal though innocent cause. I resolved, therefore, to leave that cure to time which time alone could effect; and as I felt reluctant, after the scene which had just passed, to touch upon common topics, I resolved to communicate Professor Neuhuller's message to him by a note. This again reminded me of my deficiency in that great agent which is rather indispensable to men of letters in all parts of the world, excepting those where certain primitive people scratch their lucubrations upon leaves. No time was to be lost, however, in supplying this desideratum. The Post, even a German Post, is tolerably peremptory in its

departure, and besides, every minute was sixty till I rejoined my dear Bertha.

Some time before the period I am adverting to, a few students of the chemical class had betaken themselves to the analysis of the inks and pigments used for the illumination of the manuscripts of the middle ages, the writing and ornaments of which still surprise us by their strength and lustre of colour, while our science is baffled in its attempts to provide inks and tints of equal durability and beauty. The analysis naturally led to many attempts at synthetical imitation, and, amongst others, some red and black inks, produced by Blumenfield and myself, were highly commended for the intensity of their colour, and the probable durability which was promised by the nature of the materials employed in their composition. I mention these trifles, because they exercised the most tremendous influence on my destiny. I was aware that two bottles containing specimens had been deposited in a closet in Blumenfield's apartment; it was open, and after a little groping in corners and on shelves, I grasped one, which, from the form, (it was a curious, old, long-necked Rhenish

bottle, ornamented with raised bunches of grapes and vine leaves,) I knew to be one of those I sought; but whether it contained the red or black ink I could not, at the moment, call to mind. I stooped, and holding it before the feeble light of the open stove, with some trouble to my eyes, at length ascertained that it was red. This was not, of course, what I required; I, therefore, turned to replace it in the closet, and in doing so, to my enduring misfortune, I struck the bottle against the leaf of a table, which the darkness of the apartment did not allow me to perceive. As is often the case with vitreous vessels ornamented as was the bottle in question, it separated with the blow into two parts, the fracture following the line of one of the raised scrolls of grapes and vine leaves which encircled it. The contents were partly emptied on the floor, partly on the table, and, as it appeared to me by the very imperfect light, on some papers. This was very annoying, as they might be of importance, and in the vexation of the moment I pulled out my handkerchief to absorb the ink as quickly as possible. Having done so, as far as the glimmering gloom would allow me to judge, I sought for an old hunting knife, (which, entangled in

my handkerchief, had been drawn from my pocket and fallen at my feet;) but after feeling about the floor for a minute or two in vain my impatience prevailed, and I left the apartment, carrying with me the two fragments of the broken bottle, which I threw into the courtyard as I hurried round the gallery to my own chamber. It was too late to write now, indeed I was still without ink, so hastily changing my dress, I hurried away to enjoy the delightful evening which I anticipated, in company with my beloved Bertha and her father's enlightened circle. It was one of unmixed pleasure, but the early hours of the worthy Professor cut it shorter than I and another would have chosen; and about ten o'clock I found myself again pacing the long Linden Street towards my own lodging. Though a sharp frosty wind still swept howling through the old limes, the night was fine, the clouds had been hurried away by the strong blast, and the heavens, as dark as ebony, were studded with countless stars, glittering sharp and clear in this frosty atmosphere, save where the faint light of the setting moon cast a silver veil through which they gleamed with a more tranquil lustre. All was quiet in the streets, except now and then, when the wind hurried past some fragment of a

Bursch chorus, softened and sweetened by distance; or the ear caught the tramp of the town Jagers on the crisp snow. I am not superstitious, that is for a German, yet, even now, I cannot look back upon a circumstance which occurred by that corner of the Linden Street, where it is crossed by the Elector George Street between the old church and Verenschlaufer's book warehouse, without fancying that, as my favourite Shakspear says, "There are many things in heaven and earth that philosophers do not know." Just as I had reached the place I have mentioned, I started back in some terror, and more astonishment, at finding the breadth of the trottoir crossed by a kind of narrow trench (rendered very visible by the surrounding snow,) which certainly had not existed four hours previous, and which was very unlikely to have been left open even if it had been dug during the interval. I at first thought that it was a strong shadow, but the moon was not powerful enough to cast one of such intense depth on a surface of snow, and on thrusting my stick into the apparent cavity it encountered no opposition. I certainly felt greatly surprised, but prepared to walk round the extremity of the opening, when I was suddenly struck by its exact

resemblance to the graves in that part of Germany, which sextons usually contrive to shape in the fashion of the expected coffin, though of course larger. I paused, while an undefinable thrill crept through my whole frame. I tried to penetrate the depth of the cavity with my eyes, and, as my sight seemed to grow accustomed to the darkness, I plainly distinguished a coffin with silver ornaments. A glow worm was trailing its pale green light along the surface, and as it approached the central plate, reserved for the name of the deceased, I read with horror, by the feeble illumination, that of "Blumenfield." I staggered back, and covered my eyes with both my hands. At that moment the clock of the old church chimed the first quarter after ten. I looked again for the grave, but there was nothing before me except the white pathway marked by the footsteps of those who had trod it since the snow had ceased to fall. All this might have been a trick of the imagination, arising from some involuntary and undetected recollection of the words Blumenfield had used; but it must be confessed that it was a singular one, and more especially when taken in connection with what followed.

I reached home; and, as it was yet early, I resolved to make another attempt to deliver professor Neuhuller's message to Blumenfield; who might otherwise leave Gottingen for the vacation too early on the following morning to read any note I might intrust to the servant of the house, even if that expert person was alert enough to put it into his hand before his departure. I went round the gallery to his apartment. The outer door was open, but the very embers on the stove had expired, and the rooms were in total darkness. I knocked at the inner door three or four times, but received no answer. I was afraid to irritate Blumenfield by persevering, or by entering his room, (for I felt assured, that he must have heard my knock, though he would not reply to it,) I was therefore compelled, after all, to trust the matter to a note. As I was leaving the chamber, my foot encountered something, which, on stooping down, I found to be my hunting knife, but with the large blade open. I thought not much of this last circumstance, as the spring was one, the dismissal of which from its imperfectly performed office, I had frequently contemplated. I concluded, therefore, that the blade had flown open when it fell

on the floor: but, when I returned to my room, I was startled for a moment, as the light showed me the white handle of my knife spotted and stained with crimson. I speedily recollected, however, that it must have fallen in the red ink spilt on the floor, and which I now observed, had also given a most sanguinary hue to many portions of the dress I had changed before going out for the evening. This was somewhat vexatious, for the suit was a handsome one; (who ever passed the morning with his mistress ill-attired?) and I felt too sure of the admirable qualities of the compound we had manufactured, to imagine that its "damned spots" would ever yield to the industry of mortal scourers.

But what are the economical evils of life to a man in love! I wrote a pencil note to Blumenfield, communicating Professor N——'s message and my own good wishes; gave it to our ancient Hebe, Margaret Schlenk, went to bed, and dreamed that Bertha and myself were sailing through heaven in the pearly boat of the new moon. Suddenly my dream became confused. I thought that the stars, amongst which we were quietly floating, began to whirl round and round with frightful rapidity. A fiery haze, from the midst of which a

thousand horrid faces mocked and mowed at us, enveloped our celestial bark: suddenly that was shattered by a shower of thunder-bolts; down we fell thousands of fathoms, through storm and sleet, darkness and the clang of warring elements. In my terror I strove to clasp Bertha, but she fell faster than I. I gasped with agony, as I saw her fluttering white garments diminished to a speck, and at the same moment a gigantic shadowy figure arrested my own flight through the regions of space, with a strong grasp. In its dim outline of form and feature it bore the lineaments of my unhappy friend, and I shouted "Blumenfield!"

"Yes," replied a voice, as I awoke with a start, and found a heavy hand upon my shoulder; "yes, unhappy young man, no wonder that your troubled visions should even now begin the work of retribution; dress speedily, and attend me."

During this brief address, I could scarcely persuade myself, that I was not still dreaming. The speaker was one of the University magistrates. Two Jagers stood at the foot of the bed. Nearer the door were the master and mistress and the servants of the house, with

one of their lodgers, looking disturbed and anxious, and whispering rapidly to each other.

"What is the meaning of all this," I inquired; "why is the privacy of my apartment invaded, my door forced open? Are you mad, or is this some miserable attempt at a Christmas frolic? Tell me, Hans," I said to the student, "what is the object of this assemblage? I have not a single scandal to answer for, or even a renowning."

Hans looked steadily at me, but said nothing.

"Rise, Sir," repeated the magistrate; "I command you in the name of the law!"

Resistance or disobedience to this mandate would have been derogatory to myself. The room being cleared therefore of all but the officers of the police, I dressed with all speed. "And now," I inquired, "where is it your pleasure that I should accompany you?"

The magistrate merely opened the door of the apartment, and motioned me to follow him; the two subordinates kept close by my side. We walked round the gallery followed by many who were waiting near my chamber door; not a word was spoken, and there

were no sounds but the creaking of the heavy vane at the house-top, as it veered in the gusts of a stormy wind, (for the morning was chill and boisterous,) and the dull, hollow noise of our feet on the wooden floor of the gallery. Suddenly my conductor stopped before the door of Blumenfield's room and indicated by a sign his desire that I should enter. In an instant a thousand thoughts, that I was on the verge of a horrible situation, flashed across my mind. I remembered the singular delusion of the preceding night by the old church—the termination of my dream, (though possibly resolvable into a natural cause,)—and, above all, my friend's words, "the pathway of your bridal will be over a new-made grave." I became sick and dizzy; I anticipated I knew not what, yet something terrible; and, as I felt the blood recede for a moment in an icy tide to my heart, I was forced to hold by the door-post for support. It was but a moment; but, as I recovered myself, I observed those around me casting significant looks at each other; while the magistrate, regarding me steadily, said,

"Sir, are you aware of any cause why you should not enter that room?"

"What cause *can* there be, Sir?" I answered, with some warmth, and threw open the door; but how shall I describe the deadly horror which seized me, when the first object which my eyes encountered, was the dead body of Blumenfield lying stark and stiff, immediately behind the stove. "Gracious Heaven!" I exclaimed, as I felt myself the immediate though innocent cause of his untimely fate; "Gracious Heaven! I have murdered him."

"I fear so," answered a voice in the room, which recalled my stunned senses, and my sight, (hitherto fascinated by one dreadful object,) to the scene around me. It was indeed a dreary one. Through the high narrow casement, which shook and rattled with the increasing storm, the cheerless light of the winter morning cast a cold gleam into the chamber which fell full upon the person of the dead man; showing the dark stain upon his breast, and the trickling rill that stole from beneath his side, speaking no natural or timely erasure of his name from the book of life. On the sofa sate two of the University Senate attired in their black velvet gowns and caps, by their side were the town Syndics, and near the body stood an eminent anatomical pro-

fessor, one of whose favourite pupils the deceased had been. There were many others in the chamber, but it was long and narrow, and I could merely see forms moving in the dusky recesses of the apartment, while the single stream of cold light fell strong upon the group I have noticed.

"Mr. Holstein," said one of the Syndics abruptly, but with a tone of deep gravity, "I have a painful duty to perform; but much of what cannot but be peculiarly distressing to my feelings may be spared me if you will candidly detail, to the best of your recollection, how you passed yesterday."

"I know not why," I replied, "I am called upon for this explanation, and I might, perhaps, demand some explicit reason, why it is sought from me; but feeling conscious that I have nothing to conceal, I will not, by refusing a reply even to an unauthorized interrogatory, give rise to a suspicion that I have. Frankly then, I spent nearly the whole of yesterday, as the gentleman sitting by your side can testify, in the company of one to whose society I soon hope to claim the nearest and dearest title."

"Mr. Holstein," said the party appealed to, (Mr.

Senator and Theological Professor Brandt,) I can readily vouch for the verity of that which you aver, as during the repairs of my chambers I reside with my friend, Professor Lindholm, and saw, therefore, that you were in the house of my esteemed friend from ten A. M. until half-past four P. M. doubtless occupied in the manner wherein young people delight, and finding the time short. You were again in my friend's parlour when we sat at the evening meal, sweetened by social and scientific converse, by the time the old church clock had stricken the quarter past five. Thus much I will freely avouch; and yet it is strange, too," added the venerable man, as he cast a pitying look at me, and then turned to whisper to his brother of the Senate.

"We require no further evidence on those points," said the Syndic.

"I should have hoped, Sir," I interrupted, "you would have required none. Surely my word—"

"Would have been sufficient, Mr. Holstein," replied the magistrate, "on all ordinary occasions; but my duty requires, Sir, that I should demand how you occupied the time between the period of your quitting

Professor Lindholm's house at half-past four, and your return to it at a quarter past five, or thereabouts?"

Conscious, that I had nothing to conceal, I commenced the recital of those insignificant proceedings which I have already detailed to the reader; but towards the end of my narration, it suddenly struck me that I *must* stand in some predicament which required the most cautious recollection of what had occurred during the period for which I was called upon to account. With all the rapidity of thought, though scarcely pausing in my explanation, I retraced in my own mind what I had done the preceding evening, and the manner in which I had just recapitulated my proceedings. I saw the glimmering of facts, though faintly and confused, which might be distorted by misconception into something like indirect evidence that I was concerned in the perpetration of a horrid crime. In a moment I seemed to see arrayed against me a hundred circumstances, insignificant and innocent in themselves, but far from easy of explanation. I hesitated, I stammered, I endeavoured to rally my ideas, to recall my self-possession; the effort served only to confuse me still further. I recommenced my

narration; but at length, yielding to an irresistible impulse, I cried out, "Merciful Heaven! you cannot think that I did this—"

"Did what?" inquired the Anatomical Professor, looking up, and fixing his keen grey eyes on my face. In a moment I saw the imprudence into which conscious innocence had hurried me.

"No one *accused* you of anything, Mr. Holstein," added the Syndic, in a voice of grave meaning; and then there was a dead silence of a few minutes in the room.

It was broken by the Anatomical Professor, who asked me if I had any further explanation to offer.

"Explanation!" I replied, indignantly; "what do you mean? This is a mockery of justice. Imagining me guilty, heaven knows why or wherefore, you endeavour to entrap me into a detail which may justify your preconceptions. Feeling myself innocent I fall into your snare; but I will say no more save to one only. Rudiger," I exclaimed, as I started forward, and kneeling by the corpse, took its cold hand between mine; "Rudiger, my poor, my unhappy friend, God knows how I grieve for thee: He knows, and it may be

thou also, how innocent I ever was of thought, of word, or deed, designed for thy injury." As I spoke, I kissed the pale forehead of the dead, then standing upright I confronted my arraigners. The two Senators seemed moved by the action or my manner; but the Anatomical Professor, a literary disciple of the French School, and an *esprit fort*, coolly observed to the Syndic, "This is your Schiller and Kotzebue; it is rather strong for my taste, and perhaps not altogether elucidatory of the facts we wish to arrive at. What do you think, Mr. Syndic?"

"I understand my duty, Sir," replied the person addressed, "and I hope to perform it humanely, as well as conscientiously. Mr. Holstein, you are indeed under a most grave suspicion. I sought your own detail of your proceedings in an earnest hope that it might clearly prove the impossibility of your participation in a dreadful crime. I am sorry to say that your narration is not elucidatory of many circumstances, of which it is my distressing duty to demand from you a clearer explanation than that which you have offered. The business of justice must now proceed in a manner which will, I fear, be more painful to yourself; call in Margaret Schlenk."

(The old woman entered pale and agitated,) "Did Mr. Holstein return home in the course of yesterday?"

"He did."

"At what hour?"

"I think, indeed, I am sure, it was between four and five."

"Where was the deceased Blumenfield at the period of Mr. Holstein's return?"

"In his apartment."

"How do you know that, woman?" interrupted Doctor Brandt.

"May it please your reverence, I had just taken up some wood for his stove, and when I entered the room he bade me begone, at the same time swearing a little, as was his custom, please your reverence; and just as I got down to the lodge again, Mr. Holstein rung the bell, and I lighted his candle, and gave it to him as he entered."

"Were there any of the other gentleman students in the house?" inquired the Syndic.

"No, they had all gone to a Commerz of their Landsmanship." ("I don't doubt it," groaned the venerable Brandt). "Very shortly after I took up

wood for Count Kalkreuth's stove; he was at the Commerz, his room is next but one to this. While I was putting in the fuel I heard voices, seemingly in anger, from this chamber. Mr. Blumenfield's was very high, but I also heard the voice of Mr. Holstein. In a few seconds there was a noise, as of a heavy fall."

"Are you sure," I eagerly interrupted, "that it was not the violent slamming of a door?"

"I don't know, I am a little deaf; I thought it was the fall of some heavy body. Shortly after that Mr. Holstein passed hastily by the door of Count Kalkreuth's apartment (which I had left open), towards his own room, and I saw him enter."

"Proceed."

"About ten minutes after that time, when I had returned to the lodge, Mr. Holstein came down, and gave me the candle as he was going out."

"Did you in the course of the evening go again to Mr. Blumenfield's chamber?"

"No, I was afraid. He was subject to what he called 'black visitings of the muse,' and then he always played the flute in the dark and swore at any

one who interrupted him. So as he had sworn at me that afternoon, I thought he had a black visiting, and was afraid to disturb him."

"Go on."

"Mr. Holstein returned home a little after ten o'clock, and gave me a note to deliver to Mr. Blumenfield, who intended, poor young man, to leave Gottingen this morning by the post waggon and not to return during the vacation. Mr. Blumenfield had desired me to call him at half past four for that purpose.—I went at the hour appointed, and knocked at his bed-room door, but received no answer. I turned round to put the candle on that table, and saw him lying dead behind the stove, with the floor covered with blood, as you see." (Here the poor woman became so agitated, that a Jager was obliged to support her.)

"I immediately went to my master and mistress; and your worships," turning to the Syndic and Senators, "know the rest."

"Chief of the Town Jagers, Melchior Krause, stand forward and give your evidence," said the Syndic.

"By your honourable order," replied the Jager, "I

accompanied these good people to this house, and having inspected the body of the deceased, I proceeded to examine the premises."

"Relate your observations."

"In the court-yard there were marks of footsteps in the snow, proceeding from the bottom of the western stair-case, nearly under Mr. Holstein's room, to the bottom of the east stair-case which ascends into the gallery, close to this door."

"Were the marks all in the direction from the western to the east stair-case?"

"They were, and the clear print of the footsteps showed that the snow had been passed but once, and by one person only, since it had fallen."

"Proceed."

"On examining the floor of the gallery, there were the prints of a shoe distinctly traceable from the door of the room we are now in, to that of the apartment occupied by Mr. Holstein."

"How traceable? the dry shoe would leave no mark on the wooden floor."

"It could not have been dry—the marks are dark—they look as if the soles of the shoes had been in blood."

"Great Heaven!" I exclaimed, "it must have been the red ink."

The Syndic shrugged his shoulders, — Professor Brandt gave me a look in which indignation seemed struggling with pity, while the Anatomist took snuff, and muttered, with an incredulous smile, "Exceedingly ingenious."

"I followed the traces," continued the Jager, "into the outer room of Mr. Holstein's chambers. He seemed to have undressed there, and I found in a closet, and on his table, the articles I now produce." As he spoke, he took a bundle from one of his followers, and pulled out my yellow kerseymere waistcoat stained with the awful red ink; a pair of grey pantaloons, with marks of the same disastrous compound about one of the ankles; a stocking and handkerchief similarly "dabbled," (as Shakspear hath it;) my large hunting knife, and the pair of shoes which I had changed for others before returning to Professor Lindholm's the preceding evening. The dignitaries seemed familiar with the articles, as the Jager placed them one by one on the table, and the examination proceeded in the most methodical manner imaginable.

"Has Mr. Boot-maker Hellernmeister been desired to compare those shoes with the footprints on the snow and in the gallery?"

"He has, Most Honorable; he attends in presence."

"Now, Mr. Hellernmeister, do the shoes correspond with the marks we have alluded to?"

"Precisely to a hair's breadth, — to an outline," replied the interrogated.

"Enough.—Mr. Anatomical Professor Reichter, you examined the body before us, at six o'clock this morning: how long do you imagine life had departed?"

"Certainly many hours."

"What do you suppose to have been the cause of death?"

"The stab of a sharp instrument."

"You have compared the wound with that knife on the table, spotted with blood."

"It is red ink," murmured I in despair; for I saw the toils closing darkly and strongly around me.

"I have," replied the surgeon, "and can have no doubt that the murder was committed with that instrument. I have measured the breadth of the wound, and it corresponds precisely with the breadth

of the knife-blade at that part where the mark of its having penetrated the body terminates—the depth of the wound also corresponds with the same mark—the name on the handle of the knife, (this was quite a volunteer on the part of the worthy Professor,) 'is Rudiger Holstein.'"

"I am innocent!" I exclaimed, "as I hope for mercy at the judgment hereafter, I am innocent! but what can I oppose to these fatally suspicious circumstances? Alas! I can only reiterate that I have spoken but truth. The noise heard by Margaret was the door flung to with violence by my poor unhappy friend—why unhappy, I need not explain to you, Professor Brandt, who were fully aware of his unfortunate attachment. The marks made by my shoes, and those on my vestments, are, what I affirmed them to be, a deeply tinted red ink; the knife dropped as I have averred; and I fear,—nay I do not doubt, that poor Blumenfield, instigated by melancholy circumstances acting upon a depressed spirit, found in it a ready weapon, presented as it were by some unseen power to his hand, for self-destruction. Dropped from his dying grasp, I struck it with my foot on my second visit to

this chamber, as I have related. I know not where to look for corroboration of what I have declared, except in your own hearts, and your previous knowledge of the unfortunate being who pleads before you. There is one circumstance only which may bear out some portion, and that not the least important, of my defence. Let the courtyard be searched, and you will there find the fragments of the bottle, which of a truth is the origin of all this mischief, and which some may recognize as having contained the detestable liquid."

"Margaret, door-keeper and bed-maker," interrogated the Syndic, "has any rubbish, or aught else been removed from the courtyard this morning?"

Margaret replied in the negative.

"Then search the place narrowly; let Mr. Holstein have the benefit of any discovery we may make there."

Many people immediately descended into the courtyard, and feeling confident that they would there find the fragments of the bottle without difficulty, I was a little surprised that they did not immediately return. Minute after minute elapsed however, and the dead silence of the room was broken only by the gusty pattering of the rain against the casement, and the ticking of the old

clock in the corner. No one spoke, till the scraping and tramp of feet across the wooden landing place of the gallery were heard; the next moment the Chief Jager entered, with those who had accompanied him, and, to my horror and consternation, declared, that after the most scrupulous search, even to the extent of clearing the courtyard of snow, not a fragment of a bottle or a morsel of broken glass of any description could be discovered.

From that moment I gave myself up for lost; all that I had read in the "*Causes Celebres*" hurried into my mind. The shadows of those innocent beings who had suffered death upon the evidence of lying circumstances and, when too late, been found guiltless, seemed thronging into the room, in the dusky recesses of which they stood looking at me with sad pale faces and pitying eyes. There too lay the dead so calm and cold, while I his friend was arraigned as his murderer. I was almost happy, for any change seemed a relief, when the Syndic directed me to be removed to the Carcer. The bolts and bars rattled as I was left alone in the dismal apartment assigned to me. The clock of the old church struck nine. At that hour the preceding morning I had

sat down to the cheerful breakfast table of Professor Lindholm—Bertha was by my side—the winter storm had raged without, but the very sound awakened a feeling of comfort as it contrasted with the happiness of my lot, and the brightness of my future prospects. To-day the clock struck, the storm swept in black gusts past my dim grated window, but my hopes, my sweet anticipations of years of happiness, where were they? where was Bertha? I cast myself on the floor of my prison chamber and groaned aloud.

I need not relate all the particulars of the thirty-six following days—the agony of my friends and relatives—Bertha's distraction—my own misery—how I was taken to Hanover and tried by the chief criminal tribunal; how my defence was admirably conducted by the rising jurisconsult, (and my dear friend,) the younger Lindholm, who shared his inestimable sister's conviction of my innocence—how the Judges read to their admiring hearers a very eloquent lecture on the laws of evidence, and finished by condemning me to suffer death at Gottingen, and, *pour encourager les autres*, in the presence of the assembled University—how the good Electorate of Hanover had recently, out of compliment to its restored

prince it is to be presumed, changed the ceremony of decapitation by the sword to the less agreeable, though very British process of hanging, and how I was the first selected to undergo this pleasing and curious experiment. Suffice it to say, that I found myself, on the day appointed, suspended twelve feet from the ground in the keen air of a January afternoon in the north of Germany; and that as I took leave of the world my predominant feeling was indignation at the vile usage I had received at its hands. Alas! had I been hanged scientifically, (our Gottingen finisher of the law was but a bungler,) I should, in all probability, have treated the matter less lightly; for then, dear, dear Bertha, thy image, which mingled with the strange confusion before my eyes as I felt the cart becoming unsteady beneath my feet, would never again have appeared to me, at least in this world.

Some kind friends have since informed me that my behaviour, on the unpleasant occasion I have alluded to, was firm and manly, and that I scornfully denied, to the last moment, that my fate was merited. Indeed I was supported, as I have said, by a species of indignation which imparted such energy to my reiterated

declarations of innocence, that the majority of the Burschen felt persuaded I had no connection with the death of their fellow-student beyond that of being hanged for it. It is true that the pro-rector and principal law professor Von Griest, repeatedly told his class that "men will lie, circumstances cannot," and even assured myself a week before my execution, that I was altogether wrong to question the axiom: still in defiance of the rhetoric of a commentator on the Pandects, in three volumes folio, the Burschen, particularly those of my landsmanship, remained unconvinced of my criminality. It will not excite surprise, therefore, that amongst a number of high-spirited and rather wild young men, enthusiastic and fond of adventure, the feeling I have related should have led to many schemes for my escape, which were as invariably frustrated by the vigilance of my goalers. The care taken of the living prisoner, however, was considerably relaxed, when it became tolerably probable that I had ceased to be much interested in my own deliverance; and my body, after hanging a short time, was sent to the Anatomical Theatre for the following morning's demonstration to the classes; and there it remained,

under no custody more formidable than that of a drunken porter, and a bad lock. This will account for some very singular sensations which affected me about two in the morning of the 25th January, 1803, when I became conscious that I was either entering upon a new state of existence, or that if I had been hanged it had not been at all to the purpose. I confess that the first mentioned impression was altogether the predominant one: innumerable whirring noises rang in my ears; my closed eyes were one moment dazzled by insupportable flashes of green and red light, and the next seemed starting from my head into a black and boundless obscurity: my flesh was racked by a thousand nameless pains, and though conscious of an insupportable and torturing desire to stir, I could as soon have pushed Mount Blanc from its base as have moved my little finger. Nevertheless, in the midst of this anguish, I felt conscious that I had been somewhat harshly dealt by in what I conceived to have been the world I had quitted, and my appeal from the injustice of man to the justice of Heaven was in the feeble murmur — "THOU knowest I am innocent."—"Listen, listen," cried a voice by my side, "he will live—he is innocent, oh I knew it!"

"Hush!" said another:—but I had recognised in the first accents those of my betrothed, and I fainted.

When next I became aware of my existence, it was with a feeling that I revived to life such as it is in this sublunary world. I was on a small but clean bed in a neat cottage room: the cold yet clear light of a winter's dawn mingled in the chamber with that of two expiring candles. On one side stood a little group of Burschen, dear friends and landsmen; on the other were two most distinguished medical students; and sitting at the foot of the bed, with his looks anxiously fixed on my face, was the brother of Bertha; a bonnet and shawl lay on the table, beneath the casement. The moment I opened my eyes I was cautioned not to attempt to speak or move, as the slightest exertion would endanger my miraculously preserved life; a composing cordial was cautiously administered, and my kind friends, excepting one of the medical students, leaving the room, I sunk shortly after into a long and refreshing slumber.

In a few days I was restored to my original health, and I then learnt that my friends had contrived to abstract my body from the Anatomical Theatre, under

the encouraging assurance of a Scotch medical student that the hanging had been performed in a most slovenly manner; that I had not been suspended long enough, and that after all, there might be life in me.

"At all events," said young Lindholm, "we determined that you should neither serve for the subject of a Surgical Lecture, nor for the ornament of the Raven Stone; so wrapping you in blankets, we carried you across the frontier. Long and earnestly did M. and Von. H. toil and apply all the resources of their art for your resuscitation; but our Scottish friend was right in his judgment, their endeavours were crowned with a success, of which you, my dear friend, are the best judge"—

"And Bertha?"—

"Bertha behaved like one of Schiller's heroines, though she had nearly spoiled all by her exclamation when you revived."

"And the University Senate?"—

"Have not been too energetic in their inquiries; they suppose nothing worse or better than that your landsmen carried you off to give you decent interment.

You are now in Hof Geismar; keep quiet for a short time, and then,"—

"And then," I replied, "adieu to fatherland for ever: Bertha can never be the wife of a convicted criminal; and, conscious of my innocence, I could never so far assume the part of guilt as to linger out a wretched existence of falsities, disguises, and evasions. No, Lindholm, there is another and a better world."

"For shame," said my friend, "you are not going to be so ungrateful for all our trouble?"

"By no means, my dear friend, I am going to America." And to America I went. I landed poor, for I would not owe anything to a land which had cast me off from amongst her living as a criminal; but if there is no royal road to wealth in the Union, there is one pretty distinctly marked out for industry, talents, and knowledge. I employed such as I possessed to the best advantage. Fortune too seemed disposed to compensate for the unkind trick she had played me in the other hemisphere; while circumstances which had exercised so disastrous an influence on my fate at Gottingen, were gracious and benign to a miracle in New York. Suffice it to say, that the year 1807 found me at

the head of the respectable house of Holstein and Manderson, with my counting house on the Broadway, and my pretty villa at New Harton. I never concealed my story, and I had the satisfactory conviction that most of those to whom I related it were persuaded of its truth. One happiness alone was wanting,—need I repeat it was Bertha? I had received letters from time to time, both from herself and her brother; my singular resuscitation had become no secret at Gottingen, but professor Lindholm was less convinced of my innocence than of my escape, so that there appeared very little prospect of my ever calling my betrothed by any dearer name.

It was in the autumn of the year 1807. A ship had arrived from Hamburg that day, and I went as usual to the post office to inquire for letters. As I was putting the question to the clerk, I heard a voice in foreign English inquire my address. I turned, and the next moment was locked in the embrace of Bertha's brother.

"Come with me," he said, "there are no letters—what I have to communicate, I determined to be the bearer of myself."

We hurried home, when throwing down a number of papers, "There," said my friend—"there is Orfila's

analysis and opinion—there is the process verbal—there is the record of the sittings at Hanover and Gottingen, and finally there is the decree reversionary drawn up by the judges of the criminal tribunal, endorsed by the senate, and ratified by the signature of Marshal Mortier himself, confound him; though on this occasion, I could forgive even his master."

"And Bertha?" I inquired, laying my hand upon the papers, but not looking at them.

"Bertha is yours, heart and mind, as she ever was—The French have turned the heads of all the women in Hanover, but Bertha has repulsed the whole *état majeur* of the 24th *Legère*, and even declined the hand, life, fortune, &c., formally placed at her disposal by M. de Nansouty himself, Colonel of the Chasseurs of the Guard, and Aid-de-camp to the Emperor."

"Then," said I, "I will learn the acknowledgment of my innocence, for such your words lead me to anticipate in these papers, with redoubled gratitude to the merciful and just Providence, which has permitted it to be made manifest." Devoutly did I return Heaven thanks for its infinite goodness.

"Come," said my friend, after I had poured forth

my gratitude in heartfelt prayer, "come, plague not your eyes and your understanding with barbarous Law Latin; those parchments are merely vouchers for the veracity of a strange narration, which requires some better evidence in its favor than that which they were pleased to consider sufficient in a case we need not mention."

It appeared from my friend's narrative, that about three months before, Orfila, the celebrated chemist and writer on medical jurisprudence, had arrived at Gottingen for the purpose of making some important experiments in concert with Professor Berselius, who came from Stockholm to meet him. These distinguished men were of course received with all honour by the scientific members of the University, "where," said L— "I happened to be at the time, as it was the period of our law recess." The subject of medical jurisprudence was frequently discussed in compliment to our Italian visitant, and amongst other singular cases in which undeniable circumstantial evidence was opposed by a kind of internal and moral conviction that it did not speak truth, yours was mentioned. The great chemist desired to have access to the records of the trial,

and subsequently, at my instigation, begged permission to examine those articles of dress, &c. which were considered to corroborate other indirect testimony, and bring poor Blumenfield's death home to your hand. The Senate very readily acceded to his wishes. About a fortnight after Orfila had been placed in possession of the articles, he wrote in a very earnest manner to request that every search might be made amongst the records of the chemical classes, in order to ascertain if the composition of the red ink of fatal celebrity, had been communicated by its inventors. You may be sure, that I was not the *most* idle of those who busied themselves for days inspecting all the rubbish of chemical dissertations and speculations for many years back, and at length a document was discovered in Blumenfield's wild hand, which detailed the composition of your precious pigment. Orfila, who had requested that if such a paper was found he should be apprized of the discovery without delay, hurried to the great hall of records, already crowded with professors and students, and rapidly explained in a mixture of good French, bad German, and Italian expletives, that he had every reason to believe, from careful examination and analysis,

that the stains on your waistcoat, pantaloons, knife-handle, &c. were not those of blood. There was a sensation, (as the conquerors of our poor Hanover say,) and the philosopher proceeded to detail the ingredients he had discovered in analysing the supposed marks of murder. After he had concluded, he placed upon the table a written statement of his investigation, and its results.

"And now," said he, "let us compare the component parts of the substance I have investigated, with those ingredients described to have been used in the formation of this maladetta red ink."

Poor Blumenfield's paper, which had been appended to an unmerciful dissertation of your own on illuminated manuscripts, was then read; and to our admiration, no less than to our joy and astonishment, it was conclusive as to the accuracy of Orfila's experiments; every material adverted to in his analytical report being distinctly specified in Blumenfield's note as necessary to the composition of your illuminating red ink.

"And now," continued the great chemist, "it is my duty to lay before you a discovery which may be infinitely more corroborative of the innocence of your

countryman, than even my analysis. Amongst other articles committed to me for inspection, were some papers much stained with what was presumed to be blood; many of them were in a manner pasted together by the viscidity of the liquid which had fallen on them. This morning only, as I was separating some of the leaves, with a view to satisfy myself by further analysis on a particular point, my eye was attracted by this writing. I read no German, but the signature is 'Blumenfield.' The paper was glued between two others by the liquid; the extreme margins of the sheets however, were alone united, so that you will have no difficulty in deciphering the writing."

It ran as follows:—

"Father, my dear sisters, and the friends of my house—the darkness, the thunder-shadow of fate has come upon my soul. I am tired of life—life, that offers now no-with-a-glad-heart-to-be-gathered-flowers to my hand, no star to my sight. SHE might have cheered the way of the world's pilgrimage, though its-not-to-be-returned-from-bourne is the black grave. With the thousand-hearted strength of omnipotent energy I would, for her, have tasked the powers of nature, and wrung reluctant

aid from the mysterious influences which exist in organized things, and minister to the triumph of their conqueror. She should have dwelt in a regality of not-to-be-every-day-conceived happiness, while the twin energies of resistless love and matter, by the mind-compelling will, should have burnt up the brambles of her path, and scattered flowers—but let it pass. I was to leave Gottingen to-morrow, for the vacation. I shall leave it to-night, for that long vacation, which frees the not-to-be-restrained-on-earth soul from its base task-master, the body. Ere the day again lights *him* to her side, the golden cord will be loosed, the silver bowl broken, the stainless eagle will have soared away to the regions of the never-by-clouds-obscured sun, and the spirit, absorbed in the eternal vitality which animates the Universe, shall look down with a no-human-tongue-to-be-expressed calmness, on the joys, the sorrows, the hopes and fears of the dark past.—Father, sisters, kindred, landsmen, adieu! with the last earthly yearnings of a not-to-be-conceived affection, I embrace you—and now Bertha!—Holstein!—let the path of your bridal pass over my grave."

The date of this characteristic epistle, which had not

been folded or directed, was the 20th of December, 1801, at 4 P.M.—the signature to it, clearly Blumenfield's.

"But even if it were wanting," observed professor Reichter, "I could swear to the style, being that which my otherwise sane pupil was pleased to adopt after a long course of study in those works of incomprehensible excellence, the plays of our new German school. Ha! I dare say, that the poor lad, in stabbing himself with his friend's knife, for I begin to have very little doubt on that point now, acted quite according to the laws of Schiller and Kotzebue, though the last act of the drama involved rather disagreeable consequences to the proprietor of the weapon."

"Under the circumstances I have related, continued Lindholm, the conviction of your innocence spread rapidly; but it seemed fated, that nothing should be left undiscovered which was likely to corroborate it. Many became naturally desirous to inspect the locale of a mysterious transaction, now so unexpectedly made clear; amongst others, Orfila, accompanied by Marescot an intelligent French colonel of engineers who had travelled with him to the University, went with myself

and my father to the hatter's in the Linden Street, which had so nearly proved a fatal residence to you. After looking over the premises we were leaving the room, where Blumenfield had found, and doubtless used your hunting-knife, when my father observed on the strange fatality which seemed, as it were by necromancy to have hidden from the most scrupulous reach the fragments of the broken bottle you declared to have been thrown into the courtyard. 'Bah!' said the Frenchman, whose quick military glance scanned the whole scene, as it would have reconnoitered an enemy's position; 'You are good stupid kind of people enough, you Germans, for residents in an University. Sacre! cannot you see how the thing must have happened?—The poor lad steps out of the room we have just left, here, to the place where we are now standing in the gallery; he sees no necessity for carrying his broken glass one step further than he can avoid, and consequently from this spot he flings the fragments into the courtyard:—Morbleu! where would they be the least more likely to fall, than in that well which stands so invitingly open under the gallery?' The moment the idea was started, the probability of its correctness was

acknowledged; the well was searched, and Marescot's theory confirmed by the workmen bringing up the fractured pieces of your bottle, with its scroll of grapes and vine leaves; and what may be very satisfactory to you as one of its inventors, a certain tinge of the red ink, which neither time nor spring water had wholly effaced. Need I say that without delay all the necessary steps were taken to establish your innocence in full legal form; on the table lie the results of our efforts. And now I have only to congratulate you that our Hanoverian loyalty made hanging fashionable in the year 1803, as the sweep of the headman's sword, after the good old Teutonic fashion, if not a greater enemy to the establishment of a man's posthumous innocence, is certainly a formidable obstacle to his taking advantage of such a discovery."

I have little more to add. I returned with my friend to Gottingen, and found a compensation for all my past degradation in the sweet certainty that it had not shaken either the faith or love of Bertha Lindholm. After our marriage, the state of Germany, overrun by the French and oppressed by Napoleon, decided our return to the United States; where, with the exception

of an occasional visit to Fatherland, as commerce or inclination led me there, I have since resided. I have served the country of my adoption in the State Legislature and in Congress. I have studied laws and men. I have received several letters from Professor Von Greist, to prove that my case was a mere exception to his general rule. But I remain as obstinately convinced as I was in the Carcer of Gottingen, that it is a little premature to hang a man without strong direct living testimony of his guilt; and as obstinately unconvinced of the truth of two words out of the five which compose the worthy professor's axiom, that

"Men will lie, circumstances cannot."

If I had never, since my own misfortune, seen circumstances lie faster than a whole regiment of Gascon light infantry—if I had never seen them deceive and mislead half the judgments which men pass upon their neighbour's conduct in the ordinary transactions of life, if I had ever been inclined to waver in the opinion I always entertained, that an irrevocable sentence should not be executed on circumstantial evidence *alone*—then

to restore myself to a state of wholesome and humble scepticism,—to recall me to charity, — to make me cautious in condemnation, and slow to believe evil of another; I need only dip my pen into A BOTTLE OF RED INK.

THE PICTURE GALLERY.

THE PICTURE GALLERY.

NUMBER I.

RUBENS.

I.

I hear them now—Their glad laugh on the breeze,
Mingled with trumpets, and with that wild pipe
On which the young fauns wake their melodies
When apples fall, and the brown nuts are ripe.
And there too, basking at his savage ease,
See the tamed tiger, mashing in his gripe
The purple mantled grape, whose rich juice swells
The heart of man with joy where'er he dwells.

II.

Potent and dark it glows, with a warm lustre,
Like that young wild Bacchante's glance, who crushing
Into a silver bowl one mighty cluster
Turns from a faun, half laughing and half blushing;
Whilst he, with ruddy lips and sylvan bluster,
Crimsons a downy cheek like sunset flushing,

But lovelier than the summer evening skies
When no stars shine so sparkling as her eyes.

III.

And many others madly dance around,
Or press luxuriously the flowery bed
Which like a fallen rainbow tints the ground
Scarlet, and blue, and rose enamelled.
While some outworn lie in flush'd sleep, profound
As Morpheus there had all his poppies shed,
And over them hang thickets, green and deep,
Amongst whose rustling leaves the cool winds creep.

IV.

But one appears more mighty than the rest.
In his rich curls violet and ivy twine,
While o'er a visage ruddy as the west
Gleams of the God with sudden lustre shine.
Close at his feet two crouching pards have prest,
Their sleek coats dappled with the stains of wine,
While rosy boys present on bended knee
His cup to the wide worshipped Deity.

NUMBER II.

CLAUDE.

I.

A golden lustre mingles with the air
  Where the far mountains melt into the sky,
On the rich purple tops of those more near
  In feathery wreaths of gold the vapours lie,
A light of gold fills the rich atmosphere,
  Softening all objects to the gazer's eye;
Glades, woods, the placid lake, the golden strand,
As in a dream of some enchanted land.

II.

In that delicious light a temple stands
  Gracefully touch'd and mellow'd o'er by time,
With all the rougher traces of his hands
  Hid by the beautiful flowers of the clime,
Roses and honeysuckles sweet—whose bands
  Cluster round marble pillars—while sublime

Above the fane, the mighty plane tree towers
And round it spread thick fragrant myrtle bowers.

III.

On the short sward, age loosen'd from the height
  Of the broad frieze and rich entablature,
Lies an ensculptured fragment, spotless white,
  Bedded in wild flowers, thyme, and lilies pure,
And dewy violets—On that, most bright,
  And lovely forms are moulded—such as sure
Throng'd round the altars of the Parthenon
Hymning a conquest o'er the Persian won.

IV.

And now within its lengthen'd shadow sleeps
  The hoary Patriarch of some Alpine flock;
While gamb'ling near him, with short starts and leaps,
  Two snowy kids sport round that mimic rock
Where leans the shepherd, whose sweet pipe still keeps
  Pouring forth notes, that do the sky-larks mock,
Calling the purpled vintagers from far
To the glad dance beneath the evening star.

V.

Their toil is done; in cheerful groups they're wending
  Through the cool paths which thread the vineyards
    green,
Where ruby fruits and emerald leaves are blending,
  While the rich sunset showers gold between:
Now, with the pastoral pipe their songs are blending.
  And then, the joyous dance—while all serene,
Day fades to twilight—but all words are vain
To paint thy glorious fancies, CLAUDE LORAINE.

NUMBER III.

SALVATOR ROSA.

A fearful chasm riven
By some earthquake's rending shock,
A glance at a stormy Heaven
Through the cleft and rugged rock,
Shadows cast by the dusky pines
Of the haunted Appenines,
Gnarled oaks, with roots all bare,
From whose hollow trunks the owl
Answers with her shriek the howl
Of the gaunt wolf in his lair.

II.

The rush of a brown stream
Through the deep and sullen dell,
On whose fierce waves no beam
Of sun-shine ever fell;
See it meets the granite masses,
Shiver'd from the cliff it passes
By the thunder bolts of ages;
And full of trouble—fury—strife,
Like the course of an evil life,
An endless war it wages.

III.

On a vaster fragment, rent
From the precipice's crest,
Where the stormy clouds once leant
And eagles had their nest,
Which, with its dark rugged screen,
Almost blocks the grim ravine,
Sit some wild and war-worn men,
Silently watching through the gloom
That like a shadow of the tomb
Falls o'er the mirky glen.

IV.

The helmet glimmers there
With many a dint and scar,
And the broad buff bandolier,
And the pike well proved in war,
With the breast-plate, dim and worn,
And the scarf all soiled and torn.
With harquebuss and gun
Do they guard some outer post
Of a royal leaguer's host,
For banner they have none?

V.

Look near—on those swart brows
There beams no martial light;
There are scars of many blows,
But—where was the field of fight?
Where yon rustic cross is placed
Travellers tell their beads in haste;
Saints of Heaven guard them well!
Pray for the souls of those who sleep
In the darksome clefts, or the torrent deep
Of the BANDITTI'S DELL.

NUMBER IV.

GUERCINO.

"Ecce Homo."*

I.

He weeps not for himself—he weeps for those
  Who on his gracious head
Shower vile contumelies and cruel blows;
  Better that they were dead,
Better, hard men, if you had ne'er been born
Than have spoken those fierce words of bitter scorn.

II.

The big tear trickles down his pallid cheek,
  His mild blue eyes look up to Heaven,
Those holy lips the blessed accents speak,
  "FATHER, BE THEY FORGIVEN,"
And weeping Angels bear beyond the skies
The prayer of the benevolent sacrifice.

* The exquisite picture at the Palazzo Corsini in Rome.

III.

They have entwined a rugged thorny crown
  Around his head—and now
Drops, darker than his tears, are stealing down
  From his benignant brow.
And yet, his deepest grief is still for those
The human authors of his matchless woes.

IV.

They have made his throne a rough hewn prison block
  A wither'd reed his sceptre. See!
The majesty of his great griefs they mock
  With fearful ribaldry.
But a day cometh, when each scornful word
Shall smite the speaker like a fiery sword.

V.

Blind men!—within that prison chamber's gloom,
  Star-crowned Cherubim
Hover around their Lord—though now their bloom,
  Their heavenly bloom is dim,

Their radiance pale, with watching the deep woe
Which Heaven's anointed deigns to undergo.

VI.

With every throb of pain, that halo bright,
  That crown, which on his throne
Dazzles the host of Heaven, glows more bright;
  But for pure eyes alone.
Stubborn mankind, alas! refuse to see
The glory of the suffering Deity.

But thou, divine GUERCINO—thou did'st see
Through all the dimness of that dungeon's gloom,
And with the trembling zeal of piety,
Hasten'd its glorious sadness to illume;
Pity stood by, and on each lovely hue
The gentle shade of sacred sorrow threw:
Religion, weeping, yet triumphant there,
Over the mournful tablet breath'd a prayer,

Fixing a holier light, a sweeter tone
Than ever came from human art alone.
With tearful eyes the matchless work we scan,
And our touch'd hearts repeat—"BEHOLD THE MAN."

NUMBER V.

TITIAN.

I.

Great master of all colours that invest
  The evening landscape, when the purple hills
Lie rich betwixt the gazer and the west,
  And sparkle with a thousand golden rills,
Dazzled, I stand before thy gorgeous throne,
Where, Lord of beautiful hues, thou reign'st alone.

II.

I see the Virgin Mother mount on high,
  Dark shadows falling on the saints below,
Who watch with an adoring ecstacy;
  While around HER heav'ns opening glories glow,
And countless cherubs,—till their rich array,
Innumerous, in thick brightness fades away.

III.

As mute as the wrapt group portray'd beneath,
  Shading their eyes from the celestial blaze,
I view this chiefest flower of the wreath,
  Which painting flung o'er Adria's proudest days,
And gazing, marvel whence the vision came,
Which TITIAN here has fix'd in hues of flame.

IV.

Was it in some lone gondola where he
  Lay in poetic musing, while the day
Sank o'er Friuli's mountains and the sea,
  Mingling a thousand tints that passed away
But to give place to sweeter, that his eyes
Drank hues which heaven, and heaven alone, supplies?

V.

Or was it gazing from that dizzy tower,
  Whose shadow falls upon a hundred isles,
What time the full moon pour'd a silent shower
  Of yellow radiance upon marble piles,
Whence, from balconied windows and bright halls,
Flash'd mingling lustres on the thronged canals?

VI.

And yet it matters not—we ask not gems
  Whence they derive the glorious beams that shine
So lustrous in earth's foremost diadems,
  That man scarce credits how the cold dark mine
E'er held them, more than he conceives
How the tints came which Titian's pencil weaves.

NUMBER VI.

SCHNIEDERS.

I.

The sparkling banners of the morn
  Are waving broad and clear,
The echoes of the hunting horn
  Are quivering thro' the air,
On ruddy autumn leaves the dew
  Is trembling from the sound,
As it cheerily rings the rich glades through,
  And circles the brown woods round.
Tirala! Tirala! let the bugles pour
The death note of the dusky boar.

II.

The bridles clash—the boar hounds bay,
  The horses paw the sward,
With many a light curvette and neigh,
  Till "Forward!" is the word;

Then on they bound with the glad career
  Of a summer sea's green wave,
While the gallant riders poise the spear
  And loosen the hunting glaive.
Tirala! Tirala! let the bugles pour
The death note of the dusky boar.

III.

They have found the tusked monster's lair;—
  His fierce rush scatters them back,
But they close as quick as parted air,
  And rage upon his track;
With a sound like the meeting of rock and surf,
  Plying the scourge and steel,
The chase sweeps on, while the dinted turf
  Gives an earth-born thunder peal.
Tirala! for leagues around the deer
Start as that well-known sound they hear.

IV.

He reels from his last deep covert now,
  The foam is on his flanks,
But with savage glance, and bristling brow,
  He turns on the hunter's ranks;

There 's a moment's pause, as his red eyes glare
  On the foes that round him pour,
A snarl—a bound— and three stout dogs, there,
  Lie rolling in their gore.
Forward, gallants !—On to the fray !
The forest's terror stands at bay.

V.

The wood-knives flash, the bugle sounds
  Like soldiers to a storm ;
On dash the fierce and fiery hounds,
  And round the monster swarm.
Wild sounds of strife and fury ring
  A moment through the glade,—
Then the boar's blood is glittering
  Upon the hunter's blade.
A mort ! a mort ! let the bugles pour
The death note of the dusky boar.

NUMBER VII.

RAFFAELE.

Solemn and calm the summer moonlight streams
Through the rich gothic window, where its beams
Pass soft, commingled with the glorious hues
Of the stain'd casement, and a light diffuse
Serene, yet of all gorgeous colours blent,
On fretted screen and marble monument.
Peaceful and soothing is the vesper song,
That floats the dim cathedral aisles along;
Now mingling with the organ's royal tone,
Now rising sweetly up to Heaven alone.
And thus are the creations of a mind,
Which had no equal, left no peer behind,
Which could perceive and blend in due degree,
Grace, sweetness, beauty, saintly piety;
Till, mingling into one all perfect whole,
They win the heart, and more absorb the soul.

On them we gaze, and worship with a love,
Deep, pure, and holy; such as those above
May feel for beings who, beyond the sky,
Are brightest in heaven's golden hierarchy.

THE JUNCTION OF THE OCEANS.

THE JUNCTION OF THE OCEANS.

A TALE OF THE YEAR 2098.

Yes, my dear Carlos, that reef of rocks barely rising above the surface of the sleeping ocean was Albella, a lofty mountain, terminating a spur of the Great Cordillera, at the foot of which the pleasant Quinta of your grandfather stood, amidst the greenness and perfume of laurels and myrtles, of spice-trees from the Phillipines, and bowery orange groves. Further to the west, there, where the ripple sparkles in the declining sun, is the craggy summit of Pico del Lana, once covered with its canopy of grey clouds from the far south, now the resting place of the gull and the albatross, who deposit their eggs in the sandbank which is there accumulated, while the nautilus furls his azure sail beneath the lea of the lonely islet, and its shores are fringed with sea-weeds and glowing shells. You see yonder flight of birds, they are wheeling now between us and that amethystine cloud which seems to hover

like some guardian spirit in the blazing path of the declining sun:—more than two thousand fathoms beneath the spot over which they circle, lies the once magnificent, the proud, the luxurious city of New Panama.—Alas and woe! who are now the denizens of her golden palaces—what uncouth monsters of the lowest deep have their sea-weed lair in her marble halls? There, where I have heard the light laugh of happiness, and the sweet melodies of a thousand charming voices and delicate instruments mingling in the soft breeze, as the silver beacons lighted upon the hill tops by the rising moon called forth all the children of pleasure; there is now the mysterious dumbness of the deep ocean, with desolation and the bones of the dead.

I have often promised that I would narrate to you the events of that awful, that tremendous day, which while they dispersed the high anticipation of ages, and inflicted a terrible chastisement on the proud presumption of man, left me almost a lonely dweller on this rocky islet. I arose in the morning a mighty noble, the possessor of vast domains which art and nature contributed to render so many terrestrial Paradises; the beloved master of a numerous tenantry; the owner of wealth, the limit of

which was scarcely known to its possessor; blessed with youth and health, with dear friends and dear connections; anticipating long years of happiness with a beloved wife, to whose memory I dare even now hardly do more than allude, the father of two lovely infants, and proud (it was a sinful pride) of the numerous advantages of fortune and of station, which united in my destiny. Ere sunset I was a lonely, miserable wretch, overwhelmed with mortal agony, and clinging to existence only that I might live to humiliate myself before Heaven in deep repentance for my past unthinking and criminal presumption.

I trust that the murmuring spirit has long been chastened within me; that I can say, with a humble and a true heart, with no discontented repinings after the past, no unworthy fears for the future, "*Fiat voluntas tua.*" But were it not so, did no sense of the duty of submission touch my soul, common reflection would teach me the absurdity of such a miserable worm as I am, pining over his petty griefs, when, alas! I fear it cannot be otherwise—when the day of my own ruin was marked by the desolation of mighty empires, the disappearance of vast kingdoms from the face of the

earth; by a change over the whole surface of the globe which has but too probably reduced mankind, even if any yet survive, to the few individuals who, like myself, were on that terrible day in the highest regions of lofty mountains, and then only in the vicinity of the equator, for elsewhere they must have perished in the ensuing winters.

It is now twenty-two years and one month since the awful catastrophe occurred. In twenty-two years, I have familiarized myself with the dreadful recollections it inspires; but I have not spoken much on the subject, even with your precious mother, a common sufferer in that great calamity. We could add but little to each other's knowledge of its terrible details, and such was the awe impressed on our very souls by its occurrence, that we have, as it were by mutual consent, tacitly avoided more than casual references to it, after the first few months of bewildering astonishment, and dreamy horror—for we could scarcely believe it to be any thing but a ghastly dream—had passed away; and the fearful certainty that this small islet contained nearly all if not all, the survivors of the human race, became irresistible. Although therefore, you have heard very

many allusions to the unparalleled disaster, I have abstained from any lengthened detail which I am still unable to enter upon without pain. It is time, however, that I should communicate all to you; not only in preparation for a solemn act of duty, on which I crave God's blessing, but that if countries heaved from the depths of the ocean, or, as is more probable, abandoned by its waves, still remain; the future race of man, while they once more win the forest and morass to fertility and beauty, may not continue ignorant of the real history of that mighty and appalling convulsion whose marks will remain so deeply graven on all around them. —I have not omitted fully to record with the utmost minuteness all my recollections of the great catastrophe, but before you peruse the documents which I shall place in your possession, I wish verbally to give you a brief outline of what they more completely describe.

Sit then, my son, on the edge of this mossy rock, against which, with a gentle sound, ripple the waves that flow above a departed world. The sober glory of this calm sunset shining over the now unbroken solitude of the boundless ocean, the soothing gush of the mountain stream, that leaps from rock to rock past our peace-

ful dwelling, the gentle whispering of leaves scarcely agitated by the soft breeze, all inspire a composure favourable to the mood of mind in which I would fain communicate my mournful tale:—a mood of melancholy yet not desponding resignation; of firm reliance on that Power whose infinite goodness, notwithstanding apparent exceptions, speaks to us through all nature; through the balmy air of this serene evening, from beyond the bright calm azure canopy above us, from the sapphire beams of that resplendent star, above all, from the depths of an irresistible conviction in our own souls, whenever we are humble, whenever we are just. Hark! the evening hymn of your dear sisters and beloved mother, floats sweetly from yonder wooded hollow, where the soft breath of the summer breeze murmurs through shrubs and wild flowers, which still flourish in their simplicity of beauty and fragrance though empires have passed away, and the glorious realms of a hundred climates live in my memory only as beautiful dreams.

Soothing to the soul is that holy sound; with no pealing harmony to decorate its beauty, no musical thunder of the mighty organ to roll forth with it upon the still air of evening; but instead, the solemn dash-

ings of the everlasting tide, the solemn whisperings of the twilight wood. Let us, my son, join our orisons to those of the pure spirits who pour forth their innocent hearts in love and praise for the only good, and oh, how surpassing great! which they have ever known. It is a fit prelude to a tale of the nothingness of man; the infinite might even of the least of those instruments which are permitted to go forth by the Omnipotent, and rebuke the pride of his presumptuous creature.

* * * * * *

More than half a century of warfare had been closed by the Peace of Frankfort. The new European Republics, everywhere triumphant over the misrule and oppression of the past, formed a consolidated and harmonious system. The crust of old prejudices was broken up, and from the chaos arose a thousand springs of mental power which had hitherto wound their way obscurely beneath the superincumbent weight of ancient despotism, or whose force had been misused in its support. Europe stretched her hand to the Americas in union and in love, and the only competition between

the old world and the new, for the eighty years which followed that memorable Peace, had been how to turn to the greatest advantage of mankind, the vast power of intelligence, and that prodigious energy, which the general pacification had released from the stern bondage of war and politics. Under these circumstances, schemes for ameliorating the condition of society, especially through the medium of that chiefest of ameliorators, commerce, were in rapid circulation, while the general spread of science and information enabled men readily to reject visionary theories, and ordinarily to follow none but well founded and sufficiently matured plans for particular, or for the general welfare.

I have pointed out to you on our maps the Isthmus of Suez. It was cut through; the coral rocks of the Red Sea were scattered by explosive forces, or removed by mechanical powers, unknown to the philosophers even of the twentieth century. Majestic fleets stemmed alike the winds and currents, and within a lunar month the produce of Norway or of Holland was landed on the marble quays of the cities of the Indus. Inclined planes, adjusted to a marvellous exactitude which our

predecessors would in vain have endeavoured to comprehend, still less effect, spread to and from the Russian Republics throughout Central Asia; and when the hunter on the Steppes saw vast indistinct masses in quick succession roll past him like dark clouds flying before the breath of the tempest, those were precious cargoes launched, as it were, from Moscow, Astracan or Meshid, and impelled by the impetus of their own weight, unguided by human hands, along the platina grooves which terminated at Bochara or Tobolski. Great Britain and France were united by a vast artificial isthmus covered with flourishing towns. A similar connection spanned the Hellespont, and there brought Europe into contact with Asia. Following or disregarding the rugged windings of the Pyrenees, a great ship canal united the Mediterranean and the Atlantic; while in our own hemisphere communication was so rapid, that a traveller leaving that splendid city of the kingdom of Virginia which I have pointed out to you in your maps as Franklin, might reach the shores of the Pacific on the third day.

You will believe, my son, that amongst other vast achievements one was not uncontemplated which had so

often excited and baffled the energies of Nations:—I mean that union of the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, to which nature has in all ages since the dawn of science and the discovery of the New World, appeared to demand the attention of mankind. It was a problem continually presented for solution, and alas! how has it been solved? Several attempts to connect the two seas had already been made and failed; or if they can be said to have succeeded, it was upon a scale wholly insignificant, and in a manner offering no vast practical advantage to the world at large. The petty steam vessels of our ancestors might track a precarious course from one Ocean to the other, through scooped rocks, and by feeding their canals from the channels of uncertain rivers; but this was not the desideratum. Two efforts on a more imposing scale had been made, immediately prior to that great war which for more than half a century filled the earth, and like the hurricane to which it bore the aptest resemblance, purified the moral atmosphere, until at its subsidence each star in the galaxy of human intelligence sparkled with a more surpassing lustre, each flower of life bloomed with greater beauty than ever. Those efforts also failed.

After the Peace of Frankfort, the granite rocks of the isthmus, which connected the two great divisions of America, were again viewed as a fortress on whose battlements nature hung out her banners of defiance to brave and tempt the assaults of art. Not only individuals and great commercial bodies became warmly interested in the project for dividing the isthmus so effectually as to give a ready passage to the vast arks which then burdened the ocean; but entire empires, laying aside all thought of rivalry, and assuming instead a spirit of generous emulation, prepared to forward, and devoted the energies of nations to the accomplishment of an object, apparently fraught with such inestimable benefits to mankind.

I have intimated, my son, that no ordinary excavation, following the lakes and narrow course of streams amongst the hills of Darien—no straitened canal—no limited cut, would serve for the passage of those mighty vessels which, towards the middle of the twenty-first century, bade defiance to the storms and the billows of the ocean. The plans and delineations I have shown you, supply no adequate idea of those vast masses which propelled through the flashing waves like floating

islands, and with the swiftness of the bonita darting upon his prey, were announced on the verge of the extreme horizon, by the cloud of foam and vapour, which the mighty bows of the advancing vessel threw high up into the clear air like the first smoke-burst of a volcanic eruption. Ocean seemed to groan beneath their weight, and miles of snowy foam, wheeling in sparkling vortices and mimic whirlpools, told for hours of the passage of the great ship.

Nor when reposing in our harbours, delivering and receiving the wealth of kingdoms, were those glorious creations of human power and intelligence less worthy of admiration; even the familiar habit of seeing those monsters of science, failed to remove the awe with which they impressed a contemplative or enthusiastic mind. The billows of the fiercest tempests of the tropics moved those far-spreading and solid masses no more than the ripple of some quiet river could affect the mightiest war vessels of our forefathers. The hurricane, as it howled in impotent fury over their decks, was unheeded as much as the lightest breeze of the Mediterranean would have been disregarded of yore by the four-decked flag ship of a Spanish Admiral. Rocks and shoals, those

terrors of the ancient mariner, were no longer objects of apprehension. A thousand feelers of elastic metal, like the gigantic arms of the great sea Polypus, stretched far on all sides from the bottom of the vessel, and the first touch of a hidden danger instantly communicated to the whole prodigious machinery, a retrogade power and motion sufficient to counteract the most rapid *way* of the advancing ship. In ports and in shallow water, where she might anchor, these mighty arms were folded to her side like the wings of a reposing bird, and became imperceptible. The deadly leak again, and fire, the most insidious and the most awful enemies of old navigation, were never thought of. In our invulnerable floating islands all the particles of the immense fabric, however minute, were air-tight metallic tubes; of those, layer within layer formed the hull of the giant ship. Every knee, every beam, every plank of the deck, to use the ancient terms of the ship builder's art, was similarly composed; and supposing for a moment the possibility that such a vessel could be stranded or oppressed by the fury of the elements, a few strokes of an enormous exhausting machine, constructed for the purpose, emptied each tube of the atmospheric air

which was ordinarily allowed to remain in it, thereby forming a perfect vacuum, and instantly the vast hull became buoyant almost to rising from the surface of the sea. Deeply interesting indeed was the sight of one of these leviathans anchoring with her incalculable freight, and with many thousand souls on board, bent on business or roaming for pleasure to the several ports whither she was bound. The shops, the hotels, the theatres, the markets, the baths, the places of public worship, the police, the various offices of magistrates, and others vested with the government of this microcosm (some vessels even bore gardens of great beauty); would no longer permit one to consider the huge fabric as a ship floating on the surface of the ocean, but rather as some maritime town, against whose bulwarks, and on whose piers the billows thundered in vain.

It was greatly with a view to facilitate the commercial transactions carried on to so prodigious an extent, and so rapidly, by means of these grand vessels, that the determination to pierce through the country to the south of the Isthmus of Darien a channel of sufficient width and depth to admit of their uninterrupted passage, was finally adopted.

From Port Napoleon to New Panama, a tract of country which the singular alteration of climates that occurred in the middle of the twentieth century, and the clearance of the mangrove and bamboo woods, had converted into one of the most salubrious spots in the world, a line was traced chiefly in the valleys and along the courses of the streams which wound amidst our gigantic heights—A million of workmen exhausted the powers of human labor and of mechanical aids in excavating a vast canal through the granite roots of the Northern Andes. You may have some idea of its enormous magnitude, when I tell you that it was more than five Spanish leagues in breadth, for a less space would not have provided for the passage of two of those vast ships, meeting in their transit from the two oceans whose waters were destined to commingle in this huge basin.

Never was there a more sublime spectacle—it was the triumph of human art and power and intellect—its greatest and its last. Mountains of granite were hurled in the air by the explosive force of ignited gases, and their huge fragments removed with a rapidity which seemed rather the work of magic, of that genii force you

have read of in Arabian fables, than of the limited means of the human race. Rivers were turned, and streams damned into magnificent lakes, which formed temporary basins for the vessels desiring to unload their freights on the great canal. In some places enormous arches were carried across valleys, which the unrecorded convulsions of nature had sunk far below the level of the oceans, with a boldness to which the mightiest works of old were but timid trifling. They spanned black ravines and chasms to whose depths no sun-beam had ever penetrated, and hung in air at such a height that the condor and the eagle built their nests beneath them. Over these bridges were to flow the waters of the Atlantic and the Pacific, and not alone, but bearing on their heaving waves, the gigantic ships I have described. The wealth of Europe, of Asia, and the Americas was lavishly poured forth to accomplish this crowning work of civilization; a triumph more sacred than all the glories of the most glorious war; a triumph of peace over the strife and rivalry of ages: and while the means of success were profusely supplied, even those were multiplied, in a vast ratio, by the science and sagacity with which they were wielded. You would have thought that the beau-

tiful city of New Panama, at which the Pacific was to enter the canal, had become by common consent the capital of the arts, and the centre of earthly science.

The congregated philosophers of the two hemispheres were either engaged in conducting the gigantic work in progress, in studying the mineralogical and geological facts which its advance naturally brought to light, or in speculating on those results, so interesting to humanity and civilization, which would attend its completion.

"Here, at length," they said, "is the last connecting link which will so closely unite mankind that the most opposite kingdoms of the globe shall be less remote from each other than were the neighbouring states of former ages. Here is that which shall communicate civilization and science, the products and the intelligence of nations, no longer slowly, and as streams born in the mountains traverse and intersect the plains which they only gradually enrich, but as those majestic rivers which rising to the voice of the season at once overflow their banks, spreading wealth and fertility over whole continents."

Surely there was something prophetical in the terms of this prediction!

But the work proceeded. The representatives of the most potent and powerful states were stationed at New Panama to control the expenditure of the enormous sums advanced by their respective Republics. Again, in addition to the men of science, multitudes were drawn to the spot by curiosity, and by the festivities which naturally arose in the neighbourhood of such lavish expenditure. The streets of New Panama presented a perpetual carnival, nor were wanting what seemed the mimic costumes appropriate to that season, for there were assembled the people of nearly every civilized state on earth, each in his national garb, and bringing with him his national peculiarities. But it was the reign of perfect order; for not only were men profitably occupied or amused, but they yielded themselves to the brightest and most gorgeous anticipations of the future. All day the distant roar of explosions amongst the mountains, the passing to and fro of immense engines, the busy consultations held by Boards of Science, the departure and arrival of the superintending engineers, and the joyous aspects of thriving workmen who came into the city, perhaps for a day of recreation or to meet some newly arrived countrymen,

announced the reign of cheerful labor, looking forward with confidence to the completion of a glorious undertaking.

At night the artificial thunder ceased to shake the hills, and ten thousand distant fires hanging on their dark sides pointed out the encampments of the labourers, and gleamed like living rubies in the pearly lustre of the tropical moonlight, or shot up red beams far into the heavens, when the stars alone ruled their dark blue depth. Then awoke the voice of revelry and music in the city, and from the countless delicious Quintas in its charming neighbourhood. The streets and squares, thronged with a glad multitude, were in a blaze of illumination; while the country-houses of the gentry, where the most princely hospitality prevailed during the whole period, beamed brightly, but with a softened lustre, as the variegated lights of all hues streamed forth, through rare exotics, from amidst groves and bowers of oranges, of lilacs, and of jasmin, twined round the stems of gigantic aloes in their most brilliant bloom; or were reflected by sparkling fountains, or by the still transparent waters which slept black and unrippled in basins of jasper and porphery, and spotless marble.

Alfred, I have often viewed the scene from this very spot. Bright as the sun of another system, high blazed the illumination of the gorgeous city, till the passing night-clouds reflected the glow like masses of burnished silver. Around glanced the soft pale lights from the Quintas, embosomed in beautiful groves through whose ever-verdant foliage the emerald radiance streamed with a quiet lustre. Further landward, circle beyond circle, spread the crimson flames of the camp fires on the purple ridges of the mountains, in the dark recesses of the cork and chesnut woods, on the verge of granite precipices, and by rushing torrents, which, as they sprang from rock to rock down the sides of rugged hills, reflected the red gleams in long broken flashes.

It cannot be supposed, however, that in the midst of so great a multitude there were no minds less sanguine than the rest; some who from habit looked upon the great work in progress with constitutional indifference, others whose thoughts assumed even a gloomy covering, and foreboded evil from its completion. Neither was it to be denied that circumstances occurred, such as a vivid fancy might not unnaturally connect with the operations in progress, though by no visible or tangible

link; circumstances, in short, which in a less enlightened age, would have given a colour to superstitious presentiments, and awakened those vague fancies perpetually laying in wait, as it were, for imaginative minds. I remember well when the President of the great council of delegates, speaking the will of remote and mighty nations, gave his final and formal assent to the commencement of the canal. It was a glorious day in spring, without a cloud to chequer the serene splendour of the azure heavens, while a delicious breeze just rustled amongst the leaves of the blossom-laden trees, and rippled the sparkling waves of the Pacific till they broke in silver curls upon the beach. All at once, as the President attached his name to the decree, there was a sudden darkness, as if a thunder-cloud was passing over the sun; it was like the lurid dusk of a total eclipse. Many people left the senate house to ascertain the cause of this phenomenon, and they found the gaze of those in the streets, steadfastly directed to the sun, while others were pouring from their houses with marks of dismay and astonishment.

I was amongst those who left the chamber of delegates, in which I represented the Cuban Republic, and I can

scarcely describe what I saw on reaching the street. Though the atmosphere was free from the lightest vapour, there was no difficulty in gazing directly at the orb of the sun: it was shorn of its insupportable lustre, and looked in the midst of the calm and cloudless heavens, like a large pale meteor: but the more strange phenomenon was, that it appeared instinct with life, I should rather say with corruption, for it resembled a moving, heaving mass, moving with that loathsome writhing motion which you might have seen in a knot of vipers or earth-worms, while every now and then there seemed to gush from it a sort of deep purple mist of a colour darker than blood, which after hanging around the pale orb for a few seconds dispersed, and as it were melted away in surrounding space, or was absorbed again into the globe of dim and colourless fire. This appearance lasted nearly a quarter of an hour, during which the birds sat cowering and silent, beneath the cornices of buildings, and under the boughs of trees, while the howling of the wild animals in the neighbouring mountains was distinctly audible in the city, where our awe was voiceless; at the same time, a gigantic condor, grasping a mangled sea eagle in his iron talons, fell dead

in the great square. But the terrible appearance of the sun slowly departed, men drew their breath again, and that evening, to the sound of a thousand trumpets, amidst the roar of cannon and the shouts of a countless multitude, the President struck the first stroke in the great work, with a pick-axe of pure gold.

There were not wanting in so great a multitude, people who considered the supernatural appearance of the sun as a prognostic of coming evil, but the less credulous, or more enlightened smiled at their dreams—still a singular impression continued, I cannot say on the public mind, for the mass of mankind anticipated unmixed good from the union of the two oceans, but on the minds of many. Some declared that in the silence of midnight, when the waves were asleep, and no night breeze ruffled their repose, deep groans and hollow murmurs were heard on the sea shore, nay, far out at sea, startling the wakeful mariner who looked in vain upon the starlight sky and the calm waves for a solution of the phenomenon.

Again, men said, that at high noon, when not a breath moved the loftiest boughs of the mountain cedar, deep sighs were heard in the forest, and the workmen,

as they reposed beneath the shade of the great trees, were startled by loud, unearthly wailings. These rumours, however, were naturally treated as the offspring of vulgar credulity, a mere continuation of the excitement created by the singular appearance of the sun on the day of ratification.

"What," said Sariola, Behlere Le Gage, Von Wedlon, Ellar, the great engineer Stelforth, and a host of less eminent philosophers, "what is there to apprehend? The respective levels of the two oceans have been measured to the fraction of a line, and to fancy that any material geological or geographical change can result from their union is a demonstrable absurdity."

Even those who felt an apprehension, not the less perplexing because they could neither define its nature nor trace it to any reasonable source, were soothed by the arguments, or convinced by the illustrations, or shrunk from the ridicule of the philosophers; and the mighty work went on.

For my own part, I was too well versed in the physical science of the age, too devout a believer in the perfection of mechanics, to do more than smile at the various idle rumours which would fain connect some-

thing beyond the ordinary laws of nature with a very grand, but yet very mechanical, demonstration of the powers of art. I placed it to the score of human vanity, which would persuade itself, like the heroes of Homer, that superior influences were interested in the earthly aspirations, the earthly hopes, and the earthly cares of man. Alas, how has my vain imagination, my pride of knowledge, my presumptuous confidence been rebuked.

The haughtiness of philosophy refused to recognize in the human mind an anticipative faculty more true than the most forecasting calculations of science; yet in inferior animals, in their never falsified perceptions of many physical calamities, of the coming earthquake, the approaching hurricane, the advancing drought or pestilence, we might have recognized and studied the existence of a sense, the possession of which by a superior rank in the scale of creation we choose to question, rather than bend our pride to the avowal, that its existence baffles our investigation. The book of nature was open before us: we might have paused at the mysterious analogy between the feelings which perplexed us and the inexplicable terror of inferior creatures, dismally

foretelling the approaching earthquake ere it springs from the unknown depths in which it slumbers to an awful life, while the keenest efforts of science, the most profound exertion of reason can trace no sign of its advent—we might, I say, have paused at this mysterious analogy between the dumb fear of the brute creation and that undefined trembling which filled many souls, (who yet strove against it with all the weapons of pride and reason,) at the prospect of that mighty union of two oceans which the kingdoms of the earth were labouring to complete. But our eyes were blinded, our hearts were hardened by the glories of mechanics, by the past triumphs of human science, and the gigantic work went on—Gigantic, indeed; for remember, Carlos, it was no silver thread we traced through green and sunny glades, like the puny canals which once gave fame to the engineer, and wealth to the noble of the old world; but a mighty chasm, many leagues in length and breadth, to be pierced through enduring barriers of solid granite, against which from the beginning of time the storms of two fathomless oceans had hurled their clouds and their thunderbolts in vain.

I had from the dawn of manhood been an enthusiast

in the chase—the chase in its noblest form. There was that in seeking the puma in its lair, in rousing the savage condor from its inaccessible cliff, which stirred the deepest springs of my life blood with a thrilling delight—I loved to breathe, as the English poet sang,

"The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,"

in pursuit of this my favourite pastime: to track the bear through the storm as it broke in sleet and thunder on the granite peaks of the mighty Cordillera, or to follow the crouching wolf, as he pursued his stealthy flight through the dingles and deep shadows of the forest. I was frequently bewildered and benighted during these perilous excursions, until at length two or three narrow escapes, and the entreaties of dear friends, induced me to make ample provision against the last, as, at particular periods of the year, it was the worst of those misfortunes. I possessed an estate called Ritales, situated at a great elevation and comprising a few square miles of picturesque mountain scenery, about a league and a half from the city. Carlos, look around you. Perhaps that then comparatively barren and valueless spot, the least productive, the least thought

of, amongst many wide and fertile domains; bears now, a lonely island in the ocean, all the survivors of the countless race of man, all that still exists of human care or culture, or civilization, on the face of the earth. This, Carlos, this is Ritales.

I have said that my estate was situated about a league and a half from the city, in a direct line with that tract of the lower Andes where I chiefly hunted; it was therefore convenient for me to make it a starting-point in the morning; and it was no less favourably situated for establishing a hunting lodge from which I might set forth, or which would give me shelter at night, when fatigue or the state of the weather, made an additional league and a half of precipitous and broken mountain paths, an object for consideration even to a practised hunter. By degrees my lodge grew into a large rustic villa, elegantly, if not luxuriously fitted up, and provided with all that could render hours passed in solitude agreeable — an ample library, pictures, the instruments of philosophy, and those of amusement. A high massive cliff, clothed with the splendid creepers of the climate, and bending round the dwelling in the form of a vast horse-shoe, preserved it from the violence

of the mountain winds, and still more completely from the southern and western gales which at times swept the wide Pacific. This perfect shelter at so high an elevation, not only enabled me to fill an extensive garden with the rare and delicate flowers of both hemispheres, but to bring to the highest perfection all the superior class of vegetables in the enclosed space. By degrees, I established a farm, to the eastward of the house, in order to give occupation to the few domestics, whom I retained on the spot. Granaries were scooped in the cliff, with stabling for the cattle, and fantastic grottos, which I ornamented with spars and mosses, and fountains, fed from the higher summits of the neighbouring hills, which bubbled up through beautiful sea-shells. They were then indeed of little utility, how thankful have I been in their possession since! But they were always pleasant quiet spots, deliciously cool during the heat of the day, and acceptable retreats to the many friends who occasionally accompanied me up the mountains, either to hunt, or to breathe the lighter air, and enjoy the superb view. Superb indeed it was!

On the left, spread the glorious Pacific, until its azure waves mingled with the canopy of heaven, and

the eye sought in vain some line of horizon to mark where the empire of the waters ceased, and that of air began. On a still night, we could even hear the hoarse murmur of the waves many thousand feet beneath us. A few yards beyond the extensive lawn, and in sight from my verandah, which was thick with clustering jasmin and honeysuckle and China roses, the passion flower, and the sweet leaves of the vanilla, rushed a full mountain stream clearer than crystal; and flinging high its sparkling foam as it dashed from one petty cliff to another, its bright glancings could be traced far down amongst the mountains, and led the eye onward in the direction of the splendid city.

That city, reposing as it were amidst groves of perpetual verdure was a glorious spectacle; with its majestic Acropolis hanging high in the glittering air, its vast public edifices, its magnificent squares, its broad pellucid river catching the golden tints of morning on its quiet breast, while fountains, and columns and domes, and spires shot up on all sides in the early sunshine, like jets of silver flame. Its wealth, position, population, intelligence, all seemed prepared, in combination with nature, to render it the commercial capital of the East

and West, and the great connecting link between the four quarters of the globe. From our elevated position in that clear atmosphere, and with the marvellous telescopes of Morand and Ecroquez, with whose powers you have become familiar, Carlos, as we have watched the great planetary systems of Sirius and Aldebaran, we could look down upon it as on a panoramic map; criticise the architecture of each edifice, and trace the windings of every strada, nay, without difficulty recognise the equipages of our friends, as they moved along the streets, or themselves, as they sauntered through the sweet shades of their charming villa gardens. With the same ease we could trace the course of the vast excavation from the great plain which bordered the bay close to the city, for many, many miles, as turning to the north and east, it wound its way amongst the mountains; now lost amidst woods and cliffs, then again seen afar off; a black, vast, chasm; more like the rent left in earth's crust by some tremendous earthquake than the work of man.

Again, the mountains themselves, the sea of mountains, through which it was cleft, were beautiful objects; the nearest and least elevated clad in nature's livery of

everlasting verdure, or rich with the vineyards and maize fields which reposed in sunny luxuriance on their swelling slopes; those more remote and loftier, mingling the purple granite of cliffs and rocky masses with the deeper green of majestic woods, while the misty blue of the furthest range, as the rugged outline occasionally sank down at some abrupt angle, shewed a faint regular streak of the palest azure; it was that gulph or great bay of the Atlantic known as the Caribbean Sea. Alas! why do I pause upon these recollections. Our dwellings, Carlos, still stand beneath the far spread sheltering cliffs; in those shady grottos now play or rest the children of my heart: but where are those, the kind, the good, the glad of spirit, whose cheerful laugh has been so often echoed by those hoary rocks? The sparkling stream, still gathering its living waters in the higher regions of our mountain isle, dashes fresh and lustrous past the green lawn—but how brief its course—my eye follows it as of yore, and imagination still conjures up the intermediate dells, the far off city. A murmur fills my ear, it is what the English Milton so beautifully calls,

"The busy hum of men."

Alas, it is the meeting of that poor stream after a

career as brief as it is bright, with the waves of the boundless ocean, which roughly dash it back, almost at my very feet.

On the third of May, in the year of grace two thousand and ninety-eight, it was announced by the President of that august Assembly of Delegates from the nations who had assisted in the mighty work, that the labours of six years were happily terminated. Two boundless oceans were prevented from mingling their waves only by the artificial barriers against which they leant, but which would cease to exist at the mandate of the Assembly.

"Your decree is alone wanting, gentlemen," said the venerable Las Pares, "your decree is alone wanting to unite for ever through this magnificent channel the waters of the Pacific and the Atlantic. We have opened a new highway for the march of civilization and human happiness — we have achieved a mighty victory, and if our conquest has only been effected at a cost exceeding that of many wars, it is unsullied by those griefs which dim the brightest triumphs of politics, while it surpasses them alike in boundless utility and true glory."

The tenth of May was finally decided upon for the opening of the great canal. Countless multitudes had assembled from all quarters of the globe to witness so magnificent a ceremony. The country was covered with vast encampments, for the cities and villages could no longer contain the host of strangers assembled by the event. A statistical author of eminence, Millar of Philadelphia, told me that he had taken considerable pains to ascertain the probable number of individuals congregated at the most interesting spectacle that had ever been presented to mankind; his impression was, that they exceeded rather than fell short of four millions. Perhaps the human race had never gathered together on one spot, in such numbers, or on so sublime an occasion.

On the morning of the ninth of May, a peasant brought me information that a wolf of peculiar size and ferocity, and which had for some time past been renowned for his ravages in the mountain farms, had been traced to a woody dell, a few miles to the south of my hunting seat. As he only occasionally made his appearance, probably from some remote quarter to which he retired after his slaughtering inclinations were satiated,

and had hitherto baffled all the efforts of our best hunters to destroy him, I was very anxious to take advantage of his having been marked, lest in the course of the following night he should steal back to the unknown retreat from whence he made his bloody visitations. I therefore went off immediately, promising to return the same evening; or if I found that impracticable, to sleep at my lodge, and reach the city at a very early hour on the following day. I kissed my wife and my children, bade a cheerful adieu to my friends, and left them with a laughing assurance, that I was proceeding to provide a solemn and appropriate sacrifice to the spirit of peace and good-will, which the event of to-morrow would tend to spread so largely over the habitable globe.

"Nay," said I, "I will cast my wolf upon the first wave of the Pacific which enters the great canal, and he shall float to the Atlantic,—a symbol of departed strife, rapacity, and violence."

My Marianna seemed depressed, but she could assign no cause for her depression. She rarely interfered with an amusement for which she knew my strong partiality, beyond an occasional gentle caution, and now and then a hint at the unfavourable state of the weather, which I

was frequently too happy to accept as an excuse for remaining with her. On the present occasion, though her beautiful face had a pensive, perhaps an anxious expression, her cheek was paler, and her eyes less softly bright than usual, she urged no word against my departure; on the contrary, when, fancying that she was not well, I pulled off my hunting-cap and said, "I will not go to-day, Marianna,"—she replied, "By no means. It is very strange, for the first time in my life, I feel desirous that you *should* go; perhaps the ravages committed by this horrid creature on the flocks of the poor people of the mountains, influence me to wish that he should not escape you. Truly, Carlos, you will be a Theseus, a Hercules in the opinion of these poor farmers, if you accomplish an exploit in which our hardiest hunters have failed; at all events do not stay on my account. I am really well, but depressed, I know not why,—it is foolish; but, dear Carlos," she smilingly added, "your return, a conqueror and benefactor, will console me for your brief absence, and I shall meet you quite restored in spirits and in health."

Carlos, we never met more. That wife—those sweet

children, whose infancy was as dear to me as your own —my noble-hearted relatives—my kind, good friends —Carlos, we met no more.

Leaving my carriages at the foot of the mountain, near one of whose purple summits my hunting-seat shone afar off like a star, I ascended as usual on horseback; some chasseurs and other servants were in attendance at the lodge, and in half an hour, I sallied forth fully equipped to track and combat the savage enemy. Encounters with more formidable antagonists were events of too frequent recurrence to leave any great apprehension on my mind as to the result of my present expedition. I was really more anxious to find and kill the wolf because he was an annoyance to my tenantry, than because I attached any particular credit as a sportsman to the exploit itself.

We had a wearisome chase, however, and it was not until near dusk that our savage and crafty antagonist, was brought to bay. Two balls in his gaunt body did not prevent his flying with a strength nearly equal to his ferocity at my throat. I was prepared for this, as I always fired at the great wolf of the mountains with my hunting sash fastened tight round my left arm, and then

dropping my gun if he was close, stood ready for his rush with a broad double-edged dagger in my right hand. On the present occasion, I received my adversary as usual on the protected arm, and plunged my poignard up to the hilt in his heart; but the ground had been rendered slippery by a cold mountain mist, which had enveloped us during the last hour of the chase, and in the exertion of striking home, I fell. On attempting to rise, I discovered that I had strained my ancle rather severely, and although the simple remedies of the mountain peasantry, used to such accidents, were immediately applied, I was still unable to walk without great pain. I reached my hunting seat with difficulty, and so late, in consequence of my accident, that a return to New Panama that night was out of the question. Indeed, I felt that I could not sit my mule had it been earlier, and was moreover quite assured that it would not be possible for me to attend the august ceremony of the morrow; but my regret on this account was not very profound. It had often occurred to me that the sublime spectacle would be even more sublime from the summit of my mountain, commanding as it were a view of both oceans, and from which the course of the vast canal

could be traced for so great a distance through so many of its gigantic windings—my mind was therefore made up at once. I wrote to Marianna, giving her an account of my trifling accident, and begging that with those of our friends who felt disposed to accompany her, she would join me the following morning at the lodge, before the hour appointed for opening the canal. At the same time, unwilling to deprive my servants of the more tangible pleasures they anticipated below, where wines were to flow from a thousand fountains, and all the other preparations for popular rejoicing had been made on a vast scale, I desired that excepting a few who would attend their mistress to the hill, they would use their own discretion in remaining at Panama, or coming to the lodge. Those already with me had a similar option given to them, and when I dispensed with their attendance for the night nearly the whole establishment availed themselves of it to proceed to the city; Domingo, a fine young mulatto, his mother, and one page alone remaining. Indeed, this was but natural, even the people of the mountain villages had descended, or would descend early in the morning, to witness the approaching solemnity; and in

the course of the day's chase, I had found it very difficult to procure sufficient assistance to turn the wolf from the different passes and drive him back upon myself.

All my servants, excepting those I have mentioned, had departed. It was a heavenly night—I sat reading, while the old negress bathed my ancle with a decoction of soothing simples, it was already much better. She sung, and the sound was as faint as the sound in dreams, a low and mournful, not unmelodious song; some wild American air, half religious, half a witch rhyme; thus she sung as she proceeded in her ministry. It harmonized with the rustling of the trees in my garden, with the murmur of the stream, and the deep monotonous voice of the Pacific rolling in upon the beach, far, very far below us. Through the open bay window of my library in which I sat, the gentle wind brought in the fresh delicious perfume of the roses, which had been trained in thick clustering masses from base to summit round every pillar of the verandah, while each interstice in the trellis work was filled by white and yellow jasmin, vanilla and passion flowers. Beyond, amidst emerald plots of short grass and mosses, the lilac, the

laburnum, the Indian baubul, the geranium, the aloe, and the orange flower, lent their sweetness to the breath of the starry night.

Oh how starry! how clear! how beautiful! or do I think so now, because it was the last to millions upon millions who then reposed peaceful, happy, full of hope, full of life, and all life's blessings beneath its bright and silent canopy. The last to—; Merciful Heaven! what a fate was theirs! my precious wife—my dear dear children.—Carlos, I do not repine; a blessed, a mighty assurance is borne in upon my very soul, that they dwell in bliss unspeakable, in realms of everlasting happiness, beyond the most resplendent orbs which that night glittered in the depths of heaven. These, my son, are not the tears or the sighs of a murmuring spirit: as raindrops fall from the passing clouds of summer, they gush forth unbidden with the shadows of endeared and tender recollections; between which and my subsequent existence, that night forms in my mind the beautiful but mournful veil of separation. My son, let us pray to the Giver of all peace, for strength, and faith, and humility of spirit.

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The moon about eleven days old was sinking in a soft silver mist, which rested like some enchanted island on the extreme horizon of the calm Pacific. A long train of pearly light seemed to form a bright track for spirits from the beautiful planet to the white shiny beach, upon which the still whiter breakers poured with a majestical and measured cadence. I bade old Sarah cease her fomentations, the effect of which had been admirable, and send my page as I would retire to rest. As she was preparing to obey, I heard a sound above, below, around, filling as it were, the whole atmosphere, and impregnating the very earth, of so singular a description that it is almost impossible to convey any adequate idea of it. It was not loud, but it was heavy, solemn, mournful; it had that thrilling effect upon the nerves which you have experienced, Carlos, from the ringing vibration of the huge Chinese gong we have hung in the further cave: yet it was not dissonant, it was too subdued, too sad; it seemed as if the mountains shuddered, while a hollow groan murmured through the deep valleys, and over the sleeping ocean. Twice it arose without a possibility of tracing the quarter from whence it came, for it appeared

simultaneously to fill the atmosphere, to rise from the bosom of the earth, and to float upon the waves of the star-lit sea. For a few minutes it increased, yet never was it very loud to the ear though the heart quailed under it, and then it died away in a long sigh, like the last breath of the storm amidst the solitudes of a forest. I sat motionless, and heard the beating of my own heart. The negress held by the handle of the door and moved not. A tired wolf-dog, who had been sleeping at my feet, started up, and crouched and cowered beneath my chair, shivering as if with an ague fit. As the sound gently, very gently, died away, the striking of a silver time-piece on the table startled me as if it had been the explosion of a mine. It struck two, and I again heard the faint murmur of the far waves on the beach, and the sighings of the breeze amongst the flower-laden branches in the garden.

"In the name of Heaven," I exclaimed, "what means this, Sarah?"

"Oh, Senor," replied the trembling negress, "this is the third time we have heard this dreadful sound. Twice before has it come, at the dead time of the night, within the last year. It has been heard too amongst the

wild mountains, by the peasants on your farthest farms, and by the fishers on the beach, and those who cast their nets out by the bank of Padalesa, twelve miles from shore; but your lordship's servants, and the people of the city, laugh at us when we tell them, and call our truths, which are as true as the holy saints, foolish superstitions."

I spoke a few words to the old woman, calculated to remove a feeling, I knew not what to call it—a feeling of awe and apprehension, with which I was myself more affected than I was willing to believe it possible for any occurrence of the sort to affect me. This then was the origin of many of those vague rumours which had agitated the public mind—they were *not* groundless—what could it mean? Were there indeed more things in heaven and earth, than we dream of in our philosophy? But the pride of knowledge, and the hard scepticism of physical science came to my aid. I would not allow myself to believe that the phenomenon did not admit of a natural, perhaps a simple, solution; and impressed with this sentiment, I made accurate notes on the subject, and even sketched an explanatory hypothesis, before retiring to rest. I have seen it once since.

With what feelings I reperused these vanities of my presumptuous spirit you will judge, when you have heard the termination of my terrible story.

My page and Domingo, tired with the fatigues of the day's chase, had slept unconscious of that mysterious sound—so little did it approximate to loudness. It was the low, deep, mournful shudder, which made it so awful: but I said, in the vanity of science, beyond doubt it is a mere physical phenomenon, as explicable as the tides, less mysterious than the magnetic attraction. I calculated on the credit to be acquired by the solutions I had to propose, and fell asleep in my pride.

* * * * * *

The morning of the tenth of May came bright and beautiful, as if the sun beamed upon a world which had never known sin or sorrow. A mild breeze blew with balmy softness over the Pacific, just curled by its breath into crisp and sparkling waves. The sky was of that light, transparent blue, which seems as if it absorbs all the fiercer rays of the sun, and distributes those only which are most mild and benignant. A few light fleecy clouds hovered on the horizon, and one or two of dazzling whiteness slept upon the purple summits of the highest

mountains. Elsewhere the whole magnificent vault of heaven spread in clear majesty, affording that sublime idea of the illimitable which attaches to a perfectly cloudless sky. In the city all was joy and animation. From an early hour the firing of salvos, the cheerful peal of bells, the shouts of congregated multitudes, and the sound of innumerable bands of music, had been faintly echoed from the hollow rocks and valleys of the mountains. As the day advanced, one joyous voice of exultation seemed to arise almost like thunder from the borders of the mighty channel, now at length prepared to receive and mingle the waters of two hemispheres. At the mouth of the great excavation, tier above tier of seats had been elevated to a dizzy height in the form of vast amphitheatres, whose adornments were velvet, and cloth of gold, and the silks of Cairo and Japan. Ten thousand banners of every beautiful hue, and blazoned with each rich device that imagination could contrive, floated above those stupendous edifices, while the rich costume of the myriads arranged upon the seats,—the fairest, the best, the bravest of the new world and the old, glanced back the sun-light from jewels, and plumes, and rich embroidery, with

almost intolerable lustre. All this, by the aid of my excellent glasses, I could see with the most perfect distinctness—every group, every feature of the gorgeous spectacle was brought close to my eyes.

There on one side was the splendid representative of the Gallic Confederation, with his suite flashing with jewels, and one mass of waving plumes. The charming women of his country were surpassed by none, who gave life and animation to the assembly at New Panama. Near him were the superb delegates from the Republic of red Russia, and the golden-haired daughters of that far land, standing in beautiful clusters on the platforms, covered and draped with pale green and silver, which were allotted for their accommodation. On the left of the President's throne, were the British: the scarlet uniforms of the men, the graceful costumes of the lovely women, shining brightly amidst the multitude of gorgeous hues which covered the whole edifice, as if it were one mighty parterre of oriental flowers. By their side stood the majestic representatives of Erin, now united with their valiant brethren of the sister island, in more enduring ties than those formed by the legal bonds of other days. Why do I dwell on these things? they

were indeed, to the events which followed, as trifling as the busy swarming of some ant-heap, which is in the next instant crushed by the tread of the unheeding elephant. From the flowery porch of my lodge, all was as visible as if I had been in my place in the General Assembly, nay, more so; for my sight, aided by Morand's glasses, could embrace the whole, instead of a portion only of the superb spectacle, and even now, without an effort, the glorious and magnificent vision floats before my eye, when it rests on nothing but the unquiet waves of that trackless ocean, or the clouds which sail slowly over our lonely isle.

At the mouth of the canal ten thousand vessels, from the gigantic steam-ship to the humble coaster and the humbler fishing boat, lay ready to pass through as soon as the excavation was sufficiently filled with water. Their rigging was covered with countless flags, their yards were manned with their innumerable crews, dressed in their holiday attire, and replying with stunning shouts to the huzzas of the multitude on land. Farthest out lay the leviathans of the deep, mighty war-steamers, which from a thousand bellowing cannon, answered with thundering salvo for salvo the blazing

batteries on shore. Never, on earth, had been such a tumult of gladness, so vast a jubilee.

I had received a reply from my Marianna, she cheerfully met my wishes; when was she otherwise than the most kind, the most considerate, the most affectionate of wives! Many of our friends had expressed their approval of my idea as to the greater enjoyment we should have in witnessing the whole magnificent spectacle at one grand *coup d'œil* from Ritales; and those who were not detained by their official avocations, had agreed to accompany my wife.

My ancle felt comparatively well, and, with the aid of a stick, I walked to the verge of the mountain, from whence I could trace our romantic road nearly to the city. I soon saw my wife, with some other ladies, and a gallant cavalcade of gentlemen, with their attendants, threading the chestnut wood which filled one of the intermediate valleys: that, indeed, which was nearest to the foot of the mountain on which my lodge was situated.

As they came to a green open space, I caught a clear view of my Marianna's beautiful white mule, with the sun glancing from his golden trappings; she saw me also,

for she waved her handkerchief, and the whole party coming onward at a brisker pace, they were again lost in the bowery shadows of the wood. It was but a narrow belt of beautiful trees to cross, and they would commence the last ascent of the elevation on which my lodge stood—this island, Carlos—and much less than an hour, with mules and horses so swift and so well broken as those they rode, would bring them to the summit of the mountain.

As I was endeavouring to trace their progress through the thick green of the forest, I was startled by a loud report high in the air. I looked up, and perceived from the thick cloud of pitchy smoke, which, hovering in one spot contrasted strongly with the tender azure of the sky, that one of the great signal rockets had been discharged as a warning that the flood-gates of the Pacific were about to be opened. Rocket after rocket along the line of the canal conveyed the intelligence to the shores of the Atlantic, while the magnetic stations were rapidly at work, communicating to the engineers more in detail the orders of the chiefs. In ten minutes more, another black rocket was discharged, and similarly replied to. I looked at my watch, and felt persuaded that owing to

some cause with which I was unacquainted, the period decided upon for opening the canal was about to be anticipated by at least two hours. I was sincerely annoyed at this, for I was sure that Marianna and her party would not reach the summit of the mountain in time for the spectacle: but in spite of my vexation, my attention was soon attracted to the scene below by the discharge of a third great rocket, followed by a thousand others as before, along the whole vast line of the works.

This time, however, the report of the most distant was distinctly audible, for a silence like that of death had settled at once upon the valley, and the mighty multitude beneath me awaited in breathless expectation the majestic Junction of the Oceans. What thoughts of difficulties overcome, of hopes fulfilled; what triumphant anticipations for the future, what philanthropic self-congratulations must at that instant have filled many a noble mind in that vast assembly, when the rudest mechanic in the throng seemed awed into silence by the greatness of the event, the immensity of the triumph. The President of the Delegates raised high a golden banner. Owing to his elevated position he could be seen from one of the vast and polished black

marble quays at the mouth of the canal, each ornamented with a colossal sphinx of red granite to which that of old Egypt was but as the conception of a child, to the opposite one. The President, elevated upon a pyramidal throne, which seemed a mountain of flashing gems, waved his banner thrice; and then the death-like stillness was broken by the heavy rolling of machinery, the clanking of prodigious chains, and the dull noise of blows dealt by huge engines; for the whole power provided by the engineers for removing the last barrier to the waves of the Pacific was in full operation—still the silence was undisturbed by any human voice, or any sound but that of the gigantic machinery. The breeze had died away. The ocean lay motionless and smooth, as one vast sheet of emerald. The few fleecy clouds which had hitherto floated gently over the blue heavens were at rest. The very murmur which fills a tropical atmosphere, so rarely mute, was hushed, and the air and the forest were voiceless—Nature herself might seem to a fanciful imagination to hold her breath at this sublime crisis. But the vast powers placed by science at the disposal of man, were in active operation.

First the enormous breast-work appeared pierced,

with ten thousand arches, range surmounting range; then pier after pier, and buttress after buttress disappeared, while the waters of the mighty ocean, entering from beneath, flashed upwards green and sparkling in the glorious sun-shine.

All this was accomplished, to such incredible perfection had the employment of mechanical forces been carried, with almost the rapidity of some vast change wrought by nature. Layer after layer of the huge barrier disappeared. One only, the upper one, composed of the lightest and most buoyant materials, remained. It was divided by means invisible to me into a thousand mighty fragments, and each, forming a secure raft decorated with banners for the workmen who covered it, and the machinery it bore, floated away eastward on the breast of the in-flowing sea stream which now filled the excavation. A vast blazing mass of green and purple fire projected high in air at the other extremity of the canal, announced that the Isthmus of America had ceased to exist; that the northern and southern continents were now enormous islands; that the waters of the Pacific and Atlantic had mingled; that the junction was complete. Then advancing in beauty and majesty, as if

a creature instinct with life and conscious of her sublime position, one of the mightiest vessels that swam on the ocean, entered from the Pacific; and as her prodigious bows drove forward the first silver ripple on the glittering surface of the magnificent canal, there arose, as with one voice, a shout from the immense multitude, which seemed to shake the very mountain on which I stood; and the next instant, to the solemn accompaniment of countless trumpets, millions of voices poured forth a sublime hymn of praise and thanksgiving, drowning with that awful and thrilling harmony the thunderings of the cannon that pealed without ceasing from ships and towers and vast batteries. Hosts of enormous vessels followed their gigantic leader, spreading in broad lines across the vast mouth of the canal, until the white sails of those nearest the opposite shore just glanced like the wings of birds in the sun-shine.

I was greatly vexed that my Marianna and our friends, had not enjoyed the glorious spectacle from the first; but the scene was still very magnificent, and I turned away from it to expedite by my signs their progress up the mountain. For during the period which had elapsed since I last saw the cavalcade, it

had left the chestnut wood and was now at least two-thirds of the way up the ascent to my lodge.

While I was waving my handkerchief to the advancing group, and pointing, though not looking, towards the mouth of the canal, intimating by signs that they were losing the beautiful spectacle, I heard a singular sort of murmur from below, very different from the joyous and exulting tumult of sounds which had ascended since the echoes of the magnificent hymn, the pœan of congregated nations, had died away amongst the recesses of the mountains. I turned towards the canal; at first I could perceive no cause for a kind of confusion, of agitation, which appeared to prevail amongst the multitude upon its majestic borders. Suddenly, however, it struck me, that the vessels were proceeding through, though there was no wind, with startling rapidity—the surface of the water, too, was no longer clear, smooth, and sparkling as at first, but broken into huge, turbid eddies, which bore many ships with violence against those great quays of granite, and marble that bordered the whole work—others began to be whirled round, at first, slowly, then with greater velocity in the centre of the stream; soon their rigging became

entangled with that of others, and masts fell with a crash, which, arising as it did from many falling at the same moment, was audible even on the spot where I stood.

Through the hollow agitated murmur which now arose, I thought I heard cries, as of distress, both from the vessels, and on the shore. The spectators in the mountainous amphitheatres, erected for their accommodation, appeared alarmed; there was a confused movement amongst them; some began to rush down from their seats and pour forth on to the plain, while others hurried up towards the highest parts of the buildings with eager and agitated gestures. Carriages were seen driving furiously away, and thousands of horsemen galloping towards the hills. An universal sentiment of terror seemed to have penetrated the immense multitude, which, in a shorter time than I have been narrating what passed, appeared flying, dispersing, with a frightful clamour, in every direction. I was thunder-struck, when suddenly I perceived that the canal, which was intended to flow fifty feet beneath the surface of the quays, had not only risen to their level, but even during the few seconds my eyes had been withdrawn from it,

had acquired a terrible impetuosity; and was now dashing along like a gigantic rapid, with its turbid surface half hidden by mist and foam.

Almost bewildered, I cast my eyes hastily along its whole course as far as that was visible. They encountered a frightful spectacle. Where a profound valley was spanned by one of the enormous bridges I have told you of, the parapet had given way, no doubt before a pressure against which no provision had been thought necessary—at this place, consequently, a mighty sheet of water precipitated itself over through the chasm in a vast cascade, and horrible to relate, carried with it ship after ship, nay, hundreds at a time, hurling them hundreds of toises down into the frightful abyss beneath. But what, what was this!—The tame, the feeble prelude to the horrors which followed.

While I was gazing, fascinated as it were by the appalling spectacle, I heard my page scream with a voice of agony:

"Miro Senhor! por l'amor de Dios, Miro Senhor!"

I turned to the south-west, and saw along the whole extent of the horizon rising from the ocean, and advancing upon the land quicker than the clouds of

a hurricane, what appeared to be a mighty range of jagged mountains, black as midnight, and fringed along the entire length of their wildly undulating summits, by a dazzling line as if of molten silver. A hollow, hoarse, roaring sound, like continuous deep-toned thunder, came from the same quarter; there was no mistaking that awful voice.

"They are storm clouds," said the boy; "Madre de Dios, a terrible storm is coming."

"No, no," I shouted; "God have mercy upon us, it is the sea!"

Great Heaven! it was the sea, the raging, the terrible sea! such as no man's heart, no, not the wildest imagination had ever conceived it, tossed up in jagged peaks and mountains high as the Alps of the old world, and rushing as with the wings of the wind, upon the doomed race of man. I heard the long, wild, universal shriek, which from the devoted multitude below pierced through the stunning roar of the advancing deluge; for a moment I covered my eyes, horror stricken, and wished for death; but louder and louder rang the dreadful scream of perishing nations, amidst the accu-

mulation of terrific sounds, which now hurtled through the darkening air.

"My wife—horror! horror!"—I staggered to the extreme verge of the hill. I saw my wife more than half way up the ascent through the lower gardens. I endeavoured to rush down, that I might share her fate; but my ancle failed me, and I fell. "Marianna! Marianna!" I shouted with a voice to which my agony gave an unearthly power—perhaps she heard me, she threw herself forward on the saddle as if to clasp me to her heart—she extended her beautiful arms towards me, while her noble mule, mad with the instinct of self-preservation, rushed right up the mountain with wild and prodigious bounds. The rest of the late splendid and joyous cavalcade seemed overwhelmed with dismay and despair; some endeavoured to spur their horses up the ascent, but the animals were paralyzed by terror, and either stood rigid and rooted to the spot, or reared and plunged wildly without attempting to advance—some of the party had thrown themselves upon the ground, and were burying their faces amidst the grass and flowers, as if to shut out the dreadful sight of that "Hell of

waters," so furiously raging onward — others again were flying on foot with wild gestures and stumbling in their great fear at every step; but this I saw in the hurried glance of an instant.

"My wife! my wife!" On her I gazed frantic, helpless, unable even to perish with her—I shouted her name deliriously—she came nearer. I saw the pale features of her lovely, her dear, dear face—she held her seat bravely. In what an agony I prayed to God to help her, a few hundred yards now only divided us —her eyes were fixed on mine. I saw them, I saw every beloved feature as clearly, Carlos, as I now see yours—why, why did I not die then?—Oh misery!

At that instant the resistless power of a wind, cold as death, and to which the fiercest tornado of the Indian seas was but as a spring zephyr, dashed the mule with horrid force to the ground: my Marianna fell under him. I heard her shriek even through the infernal din that filled earth and air. I once more attempted to rise, the same terrific blast hurled me on the sward breathless and bleeding, and I saw, (shall I ever cease to see it?) rushing right on from the now lurid south and west, one immense, prodigious cliff, one

gigantic, horrible precipice of dark, raging waters—or — how shall I describe it? — one vast wave, huger than the mountains, black, illimitable, advancing with the speed of light, and breaking, as it advanced, in cataracts above cataracts of boiling foam, higher than the eye could reach, with the noise and shock of ten thousand thunder peals. I felt that the doom of Marianna was sealed—I trusted, I prayed that I too might be delivered. Horrible noises filled my ears—the ground seemed to fling me from its breast, and toss my body to and fro with convulsive heavings. There was a deafening, stunning crash, as if all the caverns of the earth had fallen in, as if the granite ribs of the giant Andes were rending into atoms, and all the mountains toppling down from their bases—a blackness came over my eyes—I gasped for breath, and my senses deserted me.

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When I awoke to the melancholy consciousness of existence, I could not for a long time recall to my memory what had passed. It seemed as if I had struggled through some awful dream, infinitely too terrible to have had any existence save as the dark vision of a

distempered slumber. I leant upon my arm, and looked around me, but my sight was wavering and confused—there was a mist before my eyes—I was giddy, and sank again to the earth with an indistinct feeling of hopeless agony, and that something very fearful had occurred; as yet I know not what, but as my senses became somewhat more collected I heard the rapid rushing of water not very remote, a noise like that of a great vessel at her highest speed cleaving the green waves. The wind, too, was blowing fresh across my face, and not far off I heard a heaving as of some heavy body, and occasionally mighty blows, which shook me as I lay. Could I be in one of the vast vessels I have already described—how came I there? What had happened? I endeavoured to command my wandering faculties. I rubbed my eyes—after a time I again rose and looked around me.—Merciful Heaven! a host of frightful recollections came with that single glance. An appalling conviction flashed upon me that I had survived the miserable hour of a world's desolation, that one frightful wrench had torn from me home, happiness, wife, children, the very beings of my kind—and that I was alone on the unpeopled globe. One moment I

stood fixed in a horrible despair—the agony of a whole lifetime was concentrated in that instant—my blood seemed turned into a burning dust, my throat was bursting, and parched as if with actual fire—a rush of blasphemous and fearful thoughts blackened my heart —I was about to "curse God and die," when I felt something touch my foot—I looked down—it was a favourite little dog of my lost Marianna's—it had, no doubt, left the city with her, and having ran on as was its habit before the horses, had thus been saved. It crouched and trembled at my feet, poor creature, and seemed to look up to me with a supplicating expression in its meek dark eyes, as if instinctively conscious of the horrible feelings which agitated my soul; but I was mad—I spurned it from me. It seemed frightful, unnatural, that such a thing should live, when beauty and talent, the loveliness of woman, the pride and virtue, the power of man, had in one little hour, been swept from the face of the earth. I raised a piece of rock to crush the trembling animal, when my eye was attracted by the ribbon round its neck. The previous morning I had remarked my wife fasten it on with her own hands. The day before, I had observed her wear it as a girdle.

What a revulsion came over my feelings! It seemed as if a token had been brought to me from the dead—from the lost treasure of my soul. I threw the stone far, far from me, as if fearing some force which might make me use it against my will. I untied the ribbon—I pressed it to my heart—I kissed it with frantic kisses—I flung myself upon the ground—my tears poured forth like rain, and that gush of affliction saved me from death or madness.

Long I lay in the deep bitterness of my unparalleled grief; my tears flowed unchecked; Fidelio crouched close to me: occasionally he licked my hand, the hand which had been raised to slay him. I felt that horrible as was my destiny, I was yet not quite alone in existence. Poor Fidelio! You remember him, Carlos, in his old age, when his once bright eye was dim, and his uncommon beauty had departed. To that poor animal you owed the life of your father.

Hours passed away, and at length I became more composed. I fortified myself by fervent prayer and mental devotion. I rallied the energies of a nature not altogether without fortitude. I recalled the better feelings which a temporary despair had smothered in

my heart, and recognised my sacred duty to that Power which had so miraculously preserved me. By a strong effort I addressed myself with comparative composure to the endurance or performance of whatever my destiny might have reserved for me. I looked around me with the calmness, not of despair but of fortitude, or at least of resignation. Judge, my son, of what I had suffered, for what I had been prepared, when I tell you, that the scene before my eyes scarcely excited more than a momentary feeling of surprise.

When the blast of that mighty wind which preceded the careering waves of the advancing deluge dashed me to the earth, it flung me on the breast of a lofty mountain; a portion of a great continent surrounded by many peaks of greater or lesser elevation, and commanding a view over hill and plain, until in the blue distance, the noble range of the Andes blended with the azure of heaven. When I next looked around me, I was standing on a lonely island in the midst of a dreary waste of troubled waters—fathomless, illimitable. An ocean surrounded me. Its dull ashen swell hurried past with a sullen roar, and with frightful rapidity, as if the terrible tide was still pouring on to

fill some huge chasm rent in the crust of the globe by the convulsion which had occurred. There was not one curling wave upon that grey sea, which heaved up in long dark, silent undulations; but streaks and enormous eddies of white foam rushing and whirling past the beach, (what else could I call it?) on which I stood, with a velocity that baffled the eye and made the brain dizzy. I looked up, and there the clouds of a deep lurid red were hurrying across the firmament, as if dragged onwards by the attraction of the raging tide beneath them. Now and then, through a rift in the dismal veil, I saw a hard, blue sky, in which the stars glittered with surpassing brightness, dazzling and fiery, and with what appeared to my distempered fancy a fierce, malignant lustre. In the west, some streaks of the colour of blood resting on the heaving verge of the grey ocean, shewed where the sun was sinking after this day of terror. Not far from me lay an enormous sperm whale, which had been hurled amongst the granite rocks, and which had shaken the ground with those tremendous buffetings my bewildered fancy had construed into the working of some mighty machinery. His struggles were, however, nearly over, and the

repetition, at longer and longer intervals, of the dull heavy blows with his vast tail, which broke the dreary silence, like the report of a piece of artillery, showed that his strength was almost exhausted.

I turned towards the long line of cliffs, which sheltered my lodge. As I approached it, an object lay in my path, it was my unfortunate page; he was dead, stone dead, without a sign or mark of violence—terror had killed him.

I moved on with the endurance or the indifference engendered by utter misery—at another time I should have wept, for he was a good and affectionate boy, the stay and hope of a widowed mother who had fallen from affluence to poverty; now, I could feel only envious of his fate. If all dear to him had perished, he had not been left in the bitterness of desolation to lament their loss.

I moved on and turned the corner of the horse-shoe cliff. It seemed as if my eyes rested on a miracle, for the lodge remained uninjured. The very trees, where the birds sat cowering, and the flowers of the garden had been sheltered from the whirlwind, that came with the terrific wave, by the massive and protecting rocks which so

nearly encircled it. Those trees were drooping, and no murmur sang amongst their leaves; but they seemed to me friends who had survived the general destruction, and, as I gazed upon them—as I recalled those who had sat beneath their fragrant shade—the fountain of my tears was once more opened, and I wept aloud.

My name was suddenly pronounced with a wild cry, and before I recovered from the startling effect of such a sound at such a moment, Domingo, my mulatto, was at my feet. I raised him—the fanciful distinctions of society, and the wicked one of colour, were forgotten in a moment. I saw only the man and the brother. I raised Domingo, I pressed him to my heart, and our tears mingled. Thus we stood on a lonely island, with that fearful sky above us—with that terrible looking ocean rushing past, its leaden waters careering over a dead world—perhaps the last dark and the last white man, the sole survivors of countless myriads—we stood alone and wept.

* * * * * *

Domingo's information added little to my own frightful recollections; he had seen the advancing precipice of waters, and with his poor mother, turned with a natural

instinct to fly towards the house, but they were overtaken by that terrific blast, which, as with the arms of a giant, tore them asunder; the unfortunate negress was probably borne away upon its breath like a feather, or a winter leaf, to instant destruction. Domingo described himself as having been carried off his feet with irresistible violence for many yards, and then, by a kind of eddy, whirled round the corner of the cliffs which encircled the lodge, where he was dashed upon the earth with such violence as to deprive him of his senses; when he recovered, he saw nothing but the wild waste of waters raging past with terrific fury, and, as he described it, the summits of high mountains broken away and falling into the dreadful torrent; yet not sinking immediately, but owing to its inconceivable velocity, borne away far out of sight upon the surface of the rushing water, as if its waves had been of iron.

That awful night was past in darkness and in misery. I could not enter the lodge where there was so much to recall agonizing recollections. I spent the night prostrate on the ground, in tears and in prayer. Devoutly at length did I humble myself to my Maker—devoutly did I recognize and bend my soul to his inscrutable

pleasure, shown in the miraculous preservation of the two helpless creatures who were, perhaps, all the dwellers upon earth to whom his being was known.

The morning came grey and misty, with the clouds weeping big rain-drops, heavy and slow, as if they were Nature's tears, and with a chill wind moaning over the sea, which now no longer rushed past the island, but rose in vast sullen undulations of discoloured water. As far as eye could reach, everything was sad, and dreary, and desolate as my own heart; but I arose prepared to encounter my destiny, and to fulfil without repining the will of Heaven.

Domingo, still weeping for his mother, to whom he was greatly attached, went to see to the condition of the horses and cattle in the caves, where they were always kept, and from whence we had heard their neighs and melancholy lowings, at intervals during the long sad night. I climbed the cliff above the lodge, now become a sort of small table mountain, terminating the ridge which intersects our island. From thence I cast my eye far and wide over the turbid stillness of the sea without encountering any object to break its dreary monotony of colour and swell, except

some very distant elevations, still covered with snow, above the surface of the water, the summits of mountains not altogether submerged. Many of much greater height had been in sight from the lodge, but had no doubt, been rent from their bases, as Domingo described, or had sunk in vast chasms caused by the deluge. At this dreary prospect I felt my heart sink, but I prayed to be strengthened, and descended to the shore. Strange to say the ills of my mind seemed to have driven away mere bodily pain, and with the help of a stick I could walk, without great suffering, on the ancle which but the day before had failed me when I wished to seek death.

I traversed the shores of the island looking idly, for wonder was exhausted, at marine shells and weeds, and pebbles tossed upon a green sward which had bloomed but the preceeding morning nearly ten thousand feet above the level of the ocean. As I followed the windings of the shore, I turned into a bay, which had been hidden from my sight when on the cliff by the formation of the coast, and by the high rocks which encompassed the inlet. Judge, Carlos, of my sensations, when I saw one of those great vessels I have attempted to describe to you, though of the third or fourth class, lying on the

shore, and nearly occupying the considerable indenture which formed the bay. Oh with what hope! with what joy! such joy as I could still feel, I hastened forward. Perhaps other human beings were on board miraculously preserved like myself. I should again see and mingle with my kind, and find some consolation even in the community of that sorrow which had overwhelmed us all. I hurried on as fast as my weakness and the agitation of my spirit would permit. I climbed the dizzy height of the huge side with a difficulty which you, Carlos, can estimate, for it has been the capital exploit of youth and daring in your brothers and yourself to surmount that mighty ruin which still lies upon our coast; now grey, shapeless, covered with shells and sea-mosses, and presenting in its rugged and hoary ascent precisely that degree of risk which seems to challenge the powers and stimulate the activity of boyhood. With difficulty then, and with much danger, I reached the enormous deck; but all was silence and solitude. The dead were alone there. Some bodies were lying as if violently forced into positions amongst the machinery, and into recesses of the wood-work by the passing of heavy seas over the vessel; most of them bore tokens of

the immense power with which they had been flung into the situations where they were lying, and all were quite dead.

I could comprehend that the people on board had rushed upon the upper decks on the appearance of an imminent and mysterious danger, and except the few ghastly objects before me, had all been swept into the raging sea. I descended below, and traversed the vast fabric for many hours; but its splendid halls and long arcades were as still as the tomb. I shouted aloud, and nought replied but the echoes which mournfully arose from the hollow ship, and murmuring along the deserted corridors, died away far off into silence. Around me in overpowering profusion lay the treasures of nature and art—there existed scarcely an object of beauty or utility which was not to be found in one of those floating cities; but how valueless was all now, —they had been created for the benefit or enjoyment of a race which had ceased to exist.

I returned to the deck. It was nearly sunset; the unnatural grey of the sky had given place to cloudy masses, through which the azure of the firmament was once more becoming visible, while in the west the

heavens were all aflame with the splendour of the sinking sun. As I reached the open deck, Domingo, who had come in search of me, uneasy and alarmed at my prolonged absence, mounted the side. With his aid I renewed my researches, until darkness compelled us to desist, and we slept that night in a gorgeous banqueting hall of the desolate vessel. The ensuing day we recommenced our examination in other quarters of the huge edifice. At length we thought that in the deep silence we heard voices afar off; we hurried to the spot, and hastily flinging open the door of one of a splendid suite of chambers, beheld a group of human beings.

On a rich sofa lay the body of a middle aged and strikingly beautiful woman, evidently dead: a younger female, whose face was hidden by the dishevelled tresses of her long bright hair, was kneeling on the floor; her head resting on the bosom, and her arms clasping the waist of the deceased—two women, one old the other finely formed and handsome, apparently about seventeen, and both possessing the cast of features peculiar to the natives of the Phillipines, as well as dressed in the picturesque costume of the Manilla Creoles,

stood in mute sorrow by the side of the dead. The strong red light of the setting sun, for our second day's search had lasted till evening, streamed in upon the mourners with a glow and glitter which seemed to mock at their melancholy occupation. When the persons who were standing nearly in front of the door saw Domingo and myself, they screamed, and the weeping lady, raising her head, discovered to us the colourless, but very lovely features of an European girl of eighteen or nineteen. She arose pale, and in tears, but awaited my advance with the natural grace and self-possession of good birth and education. It occurred to me from her appearance that she was English, and I addressed her in that language—explanations were soon given of the awful circumstances which had thrown us together. She had, it seemed, the preceding morning quitted Japan with her father, a gentleman holding a high office under the British Government of those islands. His object was to remove her mother, whose delicate health required the change, as speedily as possible to an European climate, and their passage had been taken on one of the great ships, which intended to make the voyage through the mighty new canal of the

American isthmus. They had not left the harbour of Nambu more than a few hours, when the sky, which had been brilliantly clear, became lurid, and of a sudden horribly overcast with a black driving mist. "From that time," said Henrietta Albany, such was the young lady's name, "all was terror and confusion, the waves were at first not high, but the ship despite of her gigantic powers was wholly unmanageable; now spinning round with frightful rapidity, and then rushing on with the velocity of some buoyant object shooting over the smooth verge of a cataract; at length vast seas rolled in ceaseless succession over the vessel, which trembled and groaned through all her mighty frame as if on the eve of instant dissolution. My father hurried to the upper deck—we were preparing to follow, when a horrid shock—a roar like thunder—and a brief period of utter darkness left us only to imagine that all hope was lost. On recovering my senses, which wavered at this terrible moment, I felt that the vessel was no longer in motion. By a dull light, which began to stream in, pale and lustreless, through the windows, I saw my dear, dear, mother extended evidently lifeless on the floor—alas, her delicate frame could

not endure a shock so appalling!—her gentle spirit had fled—she had left me for ever. Her two principal female servants had been in the chamber at the period when we attempted to leave it—had we succeeded all, all must have perished with my poor father, and the thousands, who like us, were temporary or permanent occupants of the devoted vessel."

This brief narrative, you will easily believe, my dear son, was not delivered as I now give it; but with tears and sobs, and those passionate bursts of sorrow which shake young hearts in the bitterness of their first great grief; yet even her sorrow paused as with deep wonder, and a deeper horror, she heard the dreadful events I had to communicate in return. She had conceived herself and her attendants to be the survivors of an inexplicable shipwreck — alas! those congregated in that limited chamber were but too probably the survivors of the race of man!

My story is nearly told for I need not add that Henrietta Albany is your mother, Carlos; the beloved mother of that dear family whom we have endeavoured to inspire with virtue, with true piety, and with that resignation to the will of Providence which an awful calamity had

taught to our own spirits. Thrown together by means little short of miraculous—our thoughts and feelings connected by the strange similarity of our fate—your mother, all that was beautiful, all that was excellent, you will not wonder, Carlos, that after the shock of recent sorrows had been softened down by time into a tender sadness, we became united before that Heaven which had willed our meeting. Never for a moment have I had any cause but to bless the goodness of that Providence which in the hour of despair and desolation sent me so inestimable a comforter—so dear a companion: but I have a great duty to perform—a duty to which it seems to me I am called by the very circumstance of our miraculous preservation. I have prepared your mother for it—she weeps, but she assents. Carlos, it is borne in upon my mind, that I have a high commission to seek if there yet survive in islands like our own some remnants of the human race. Perhaps they do, a prey to the misfortunes of want and ignorance, from which we have ourselves been preserved only by an extraordinary concurrence of events—if it ought not to be called a miraculous dispensation. I cannot conquer an impression, with which nevertheless, I

have struggled from a sense of present happiness no change can increase, that it may be reserved for me to re-illumine the lamp of human knowledge, to rekindle the smouldering flame of true religion amongst mankind. It may be my lot to re-unite the survivors of the human race under the banners of civilization and society, to organise once more those combinations which are the elements of power, the sources and safeguards of enlightened happiness.

Continents upon which the foundations of the ocean rested for countless ages, have, no doubt, been abandoned by its waves. There a rich and genial soil like that of the primeval earth, as yet untasked by the wants of mankind, may await the new human race. Guided by the intelligence and armed with the science of a former world, we shall more successfully than did our fellow men in the dim ages of the early earth, and more speedily, achieve those triumphs of perfect civilisation which a fatal catastrophe has for a time suspended.

Perhaps I am deluding myself by these anticipations; but after attentively studying the nature of the calamity I have endeavoured to describe, I cannot persuade myself that this little island bears the sole survivors of

that terrible day. Even if it does, we are bound to anticipate, if possible, a period when it can no longer provide, by means so limited, for the subsistence of an increasing population, and this view alone would justify the experiment I have decided upon making, while I retain and can communicate a practical knowledge of that art which might in another generation become but a theory. A bold and fearless seaman in my youth—glad, in those beautiful vessels which my fortune enabled me to command, to try my skill against the wave and the breeze, I shall once more career with joy on the blue waters; but I have now many reasons for caution, and many incentives to prudence—I am too happy to be rash. The vessel we have constructed from that enormous wreck, has properties of perfect safety which were undreamed of in the most sanguine visions of ancient navigation; manned by Domingo and three of his stout sons, with two of your own brave brothers, Carlos, I shall embark in it with a fearless trust that, by Heaven's blessing I shall, unlike the unfortunate adventurers of earlier ages, even if unsuccessful in the object of my voyage at least return to my own happy home, contented that I have not shunned what I thought my duty.

To you a more sacred charge belongs. You have reached an age, and you are of character which justifies my consigning it to you with a confidence as entire as my affection. Rule our little community—attend in my absence to those things which are essential to the general welfare—I need not say, comfort your mother and your dear sisters, or watch over those rising blossoms who are even now giving promise of such goodly fruit—your own heart will in these things be a better teacher, a better counsellor, than even a father.

At the next full moon, Carlos, I commence my voyage; with no vain confidence in my own fortune, no presumptuous dependence upon the resources of intellect or the aids of science; but with a humble reliance upon that Power into whose hands I reverently commit the issue of my enterprize. If it be his will, I shall succeed. Without his aid, I know my search will be in vain. But my hopes are full of strength, and in my soul there is a feeling which urges me to my undertaking with a solemn intensity of impulse that will not be controlled. See, my son, night has descended upon our discourse, soft and shadowy, and weaving amidst her dark dewy tresses the balm of this delicious climate. Myriads of

fires, sapphire, and amethyst and pale emerald, glitter with everlasting splendour in that glorious canopy; but mark, Carlos, yonder magnificent constellation, rising with a burning lustre, in the south-east.—It forms a perfect cross—Not to the fanciful mind of the astronomer, but as distinct and defined in its surpassing brilliancy, even to the careless eye's first glance, as that which of old illumined, in the holy week, the vast aisles of the Roman Basilica. My son, trust me when I tell you that it had no place in our system, before the day of the world's calamity. You have sought it vainly in your most elaborate celestial globes and maps of the stars. It existed not to human eyes when those were constructed, but on the third night after that dark and fearful dream—for so even now it sometimes appears to me—it rose majestically above the horizon, dimming the surrounding constellations with the intensity of its yet mild lustre, and casting a long glory over the sleeping ocean seemingly to the very spot on which I stood. Oft since, at midnight, I have seen it glowing high in heaven, flashing with undimmed glory through the full flood of light which poured in silver radiance from the bright urn of the clear summer moon. Often have

I watched it setting in the far west, when night had been as now glorious in her starry darkness, and when, faint as the hope just springing in my heart, the earliest tint of the approaching dawn trembled in the opposite horizon. Yet ever as that grand constellation has moved upon its wondrous path through the mysterious fields of heaven, there has hovered above it, to my eye as palpable as the most brilliant of its clustered stars, and in characters of lambent flame, that inspiring legend which cheered the Roman soldier in a mightier enterprise than mine. Even now, my son, those words of fire are there. They speak to my soul with a voice of promise. Thine eyes behold them not, but to me they address the solemn command

"IN HOC SIGNO VINCES."

And shall I not obey this holy inspiration? Shall I again scorn in my presumption, and because they baffle speculation and defy analysis, those mysterious influences which from beyond nature speak to the spirit of man? No! I will go forth to accomplish my destiny, in the humility of one conscious of his own weakness—with the confidence of one relying on Supreme wisdom and goodness alone for safety and success. Carlos, here

beneath this glorious canopy of stars, by the light of that magnificent constellation, which is the banner of my hope, kneel with me—pray with me—that if I am worthy of so high a destiny, to me it may be given to discover, to console, to re-animate with hope, those fragments of the human race which survived—that to me it may be permitted to point out for future generations the track to those vast realms which, reflection assures me, must have been created by—THE JUNCTION OF THE OCEANS.

THE SONG OF THE FORGE.

Clang, clang,
  The massive anvils ring;
Clang, clang,
  A hundred hammers swing;
Like the thunder rattle of a tropic sky
The mighty blows still multiply
Clang, clang.
Say, brothers of the dusky brow
What are your strong arms forging now?

Clang, clang. We forge the coulter now,
The coulter of the kindly plough:
  Sweet Mary mother, bless our toil!
May its broad furrow still unbind
To genial rains, to sun and wind,
  The most benignant soil.

Clang, clang. Our coulter's course shall be
On many a sweet and sheltered lea,
  By many a streamlet's silver tide;
Amidst the song of morning birds,
Amidst the low of browzing herds,
Amidst soft breezes, which do stray
Through woodbine hedges and sweet May,
  Along the green hill's side.

When regal Autumn's bounteous hand
With wide spread glory clothes the land,
  When to the valleys, from the brow
Of each resplendent slope, is rolled
A ruddy sea of living gold,
  We bless, we bless THE PLOUGH.

Clang, clang—Again my mates what glows
Beneath the hammer's mighty blows?

Clink, clank—We forge the giant chain
Which bears the gallant vessel's strain
  'Midst stormy winds, and adverse tides:
Secured by this, the good ship braves
The rocky roadstead and the waves
  That dash against her sides.

Anxious no more, the merchant sees
The mist drive dark before the breeze,
  The storm cloud on the hill;
Calmly he rests, though far away
In boisterous climes his vessels lay;
  Reliant on our skill.

Say on what sands these links shall sleep
Fathoms beneath the solemn deep;
  By Afric's pestilential shore,
  By many an iceberg lone and hoar,
By many a palmy eastern isle
Basking in ceaseless summer's smile,
  By stormy Labrador?

Say, will they feel the vessel reel,
When to the battery's deadly peal
  The crashing broadside makes reply,
Or else, as at the glorious Nile,
Hold grappling ships, that strive the while
  For death or victory?

Hurrah !—Clang, clang—Once more what glows
  Dark brothers of the Forge beneath
The iron tempest of your blows,
  The furnace's red breath?

Cling, clang—a burning shower, clear,
  And brilliant, of bright sparks is poured
Around, and up in the dusky air,
  As our hammers forge THE SWORD.

The sword—a name of dread; yet when
  Upon the freeman's thigh 'tis bound,
While for his altar and his hearth,
While for the land that gave him birth,
  The war drums roll, the trumpets sound,
How sacred is it then!

Whenever for the truth and right,
It flashes in the van of fight,
Whether in some wild mountain pass
As that where fell Leonidas;
Or on some steril plain and stern,
A Marathon, or Bannockburn,

Or amidst crags and bursting rills,
The Switzer's Alps, grey Tyrol's hills.
Or, as when sank the Armada's pride,
It gleams above the stormy tide;
  Still, still, whene'er the battle word
Is Liberty—where men do stand
For Justice and their native land,
  Then Heaven bless THE SWORD.

LINES WRITTEN AT ROME IN THE COLOSSEUM.

I.

'Tis sunset, and a golden glow
  Is o'er the Cæsar's palace thrown,
And all above, around, below,
  Shines as if earth had never known
    One hour of woe.

II.

Vast as an excavated hill,
  These walls, in ruin more sublime,
Those arches which the sunbeams fill,
  All mellowed by the hand of time,
    Gleam softer still.

III.

Through silv'ry light and purple shade,
  Flits to and fro each little bird,
Or rests secure and undismayed,
  Where once a nation's voice was heard,
    And trumpets brayed.

IV.

The wall-flower on the ruin'd wall,
  Sheds its sweet incense to the breeze,
Where erst the gold and silken pall,
  Shaded the Roman's cruel ease,—
    The victim's fall.

V.

Yes! here the Roman's haughty eye
  Gazed coldly on the ghastly throng,
Who for his pastime learn'd to die;—
  Those best, who could the most prolong
    Death's agony.

VI.

Here as the martyr's palm was won,
  Sublime, amidst the furious crew,
He pray'd, ere yet his course was run,
  "Father, they know not what they do,
    "Thy will be done."

VII.

Oh blessed change! where groans and yells,
  Borne on the crimson mist arose,
Offending heaven,—the wild bird swells
  His careless note, the wild flow'r blows,
    And quiet dwells.

VIII.

More blessed still, where every sod
  Cried vengeance for those bloody games,
Where Christians died, and martyrs trod,
  Yon symbol of our faith proclaims
    The peace of God!

AGINCOURT.

AGINCOURT.

"Fought on the day of Crispin Crispianus."

SHAKSPEARE.

GENTLEST of urbane readers, wert thou at the fight of Azincourt or Agincourt, "Fought on the day of Crispin Crispianus?" Didst thou scurry to the rescue of the King with "Davy Gam, Esquire," plying thy Welsh hook, or albeit thy mell, with a swing and a thwack like the fall of a pavior's rammer; smashing French helmets as nutshells, and driving splintered vizors into miserable faces, until Alençon topples down like a falling tower of steel and gold. Eue reins up, Brabant holds hard his snorting charger, and Harry Monmouth, on his legs again, cries "*Diou et les dames!*"—"St. George for merry England!"

Reader, if a "Gent," I need not ask thee twice.—Thou sellest butter, or perchance thou shapest the curious coat, or, bagman, travellest an annual round. Thy chin is shorn, thy face is as muffin, thy legs switches, thine arms witheys, thy breast chicken, thy ribs spare ribs, thy coat a swallow-tailed wonder, thy waistcoat half a

yard of thy grandmother's farthingale, thy trousers two pillow-cases ill-stuffed, thy cigar a smell,—thy breath a cigar—thyself!—No! thou couldest never have been at Agincourt! Why the very "whiff and wind of the fell swords" which cleft the air by the pleasant banks of Soane on that auspicious day, had divorced thy feeble spirit from thine insignificant frame. The earth thunder of that despairing charge, when Brabant and his men-at-arms flung themselves, reckless of life, against the English line in a wild effort to retrieve the fight, had dissevered thy small soul from its attenuated habitation.

But whither does our contempt of these degenerate days, our reverence for the stirring times of martial eld, hurry us! Alas! miserable and discourteous caitiff that we are, even for a moment to forget that this humble page may not only be looked upon by the unworthier sex, but may be lighted by the glance of fair, bright, beautiful eyes into a brilliancy which no feeble efforts of our own could ever confer on these poor lucubrations. Miserable caitiff that we are! not rather to address ourselves respecting aught concerning chivalry and high emprise, the splintering of lances and immortal

losse and honor, to the roses of the world, to the sweet halcyons who calm the troubled waters of life, the lilies of the valley, the sunshine of the mountain tops, —to ever blessed, ever blessing woman. Dearest lady, neither wert *thou* at Agincourt. It was no fault of thine; but if thine ancestress, as fair as thou, had stood upon the walls of that antique castle, which you see rising yonder from the summit of a purple rock amidst embowering woods, and overlooked the fight, we should no longer wonder at those deeds of more than mortal valor, those feats of *derringdo* with which the good knights of England and of France performed their devoir "upon the day of Crispin Crispianus."

But, come ladies, let us leave the finished men, polished as their boots, the dandies, the gentleman of studied simplicity of exterior, unmoved as a North American Indian, even when the footman, so declareth North American Willis, spills wine on his waistcoat, and

"Mistress of himself though China fall."

Let us leave these people, "Ah, how unlike their Norman sires of old!" and I will take you to where brave men won honour for their dear ladies' sake, making

offerings of gallant deeds to bright eyes. And you shall see the glittering of the casques, "That did affright the air at Agincourt," and hear the crash of lances, and the clang of encountering swords, and the wild whistling of the gallant yeoman's arrow, and the sound of trumpets in the brave old verse of MICHAEL DRAYTON.

* * * * * * *

Quit we this rhodomontade, and let us turn to a fine antique ballad, rarely quoted, and to the best of our recollection little noticed, by poetical critics, though assuredly only second in power and vividness of imagery, and truth of description, to Chevy Chase itself. It is "refreshing," as the cockneys say, to come during the apathy of an afternoon's idle reading, as was our chance, upon such a stirring outburst of the muse; especially in these disastrous times when verse is poured forth in a quantity and of a quality sufficient to make us believe that it is woven, like long ells, by machinery. There is not the marrow of sincerity in the poetry of these later days. We spin it from our heads, from our prejudices, from our experiences, from our reading, from everything rather than our

hearts. How differently the old minstrel plunges into the solemn yet simple glories of his song! There is no flourish, no overture, with clang of drums and snatches of airs from the coming opera, to rouse the reader's attention,—no note of preparation,—no description of the sunrise "gilding the eastern horizon," as Mr. Puff says, or of the "dark blue sea," or of a mysterious gentleman with an indomitable will who slaps his forehead and wears six brace of pistols. No!

"Stout Percy of Northumberland a vow to God does make,—

Or

"Henry our noble King would ride a hunting."—

This is all the announcement to which the poet condescends, and the terse bard around whose strong text we are about to entwine our poor remarks, as the feeble ivy wreaths the gnarled oak, dashes into his old bold song with a fine confidence, second only to that with which Harry Monmouth flung his bills and bows upon the coast of Normandy.

MICHAEL DRAYTON TO THE CAMBRIO BRITONS AND THEIR HARP, HIS BALLAD OF AGINCOURT.

Fair stood the wind for France,
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
  Longer will tarry;

> But putting to the main,
> At Kaux, the mouth of Seine,
> With all his martial train,
> Landed King Harry.

To be sure he did. What cared he for the "Law salique that they had in France?" Besides, had not Henricus Chicheley comforted him in the matter with an oration half a mile long, and, in a special pleading, not to be surpassed by Lord Lyndhurst's best, made his right of succession as clear as daylight; and perfectly satisfied the tender conscience of our old friend of the Boar's Head, who happened, in the luckiest manner imaginable, to be judge and jury on this occasion in his own case? Was not our own gracious George the third, King of France, even when there happened to be another sovereign at Hartwell, and a third at Paris, "Three Kings of Brentford?" and should Harry Monmouth, who lived four centuries nearer to "the defunction of King Pharamond, idly supposed the founder of this law," have any misgivings on the subject; especially after Archbishop Chicheley had clenched the business with a quotation from the book of Numbers? No! after cutting off a few who would have cut him off at Southampton, and no doubt striking a hart or two in

the pleasant glades of the New Forest, he started, like a gallant as he was, with such a rush as a thorough-bred horse makes at an ox-fence, or a bull dog at a bear; and how boldly in his wake follows old "Poly Olbion." He throws himself at once "*in medias res*," launching his song like a first-rate taking sovereignty of the waves, into which she plunges her mighty quarters, after such a fashion, that you are sure nothing short of those eternal barriers with which nature girds the ocean can possibly stop her most majestic course. This is the very spirit of that old world ballad poetry where the bard is too full of his subject to waste time either in reflections or descriptions. There is no "descend oh muse!" no laboured introductory lines, where bright skies rhyme to eyes, and dark seas jingle with ease. No! the one thing needful to be known, was whether the wind was west and by nothe half nothe, and this Michael Drayton gives you to comprehend by a single sweep along the chords of his bold harp.

> "*Fair* stood the wind for France,
> When we our sails advance."

What mattered it that a hundred argosoys of the Hanse Towns were unable to beat through the Categat,

and that half the commerce of Spain was driving on a lea shore across the mountain waves of the Bay of Biscay. The wind was fair for France; it filled the sails which bore the warriors of the red cross on their foes, and although elsewhere—

> "Forests were rended,
> And navies were stranded,"

what did it signify either to Harry Monmouth or to Michael Drayton?

Drayton hath a longer and more elaborated poem touching this same battle of Agincourt. It seems to have been a favourite theme of his, and the poet of "The Barons wars," had evidently a hankering after martial subjects. His harp must have rung as it were with trumpet calls and the sound of drums. But in the longer poem the vigorous elder does not manifest the fire, the terseness, the hardihood shewn in the bold ballad upon which we now exercise our unworthy pen; loving to dream all the while, that the far progenitor of the bird who bore it, may have lent a feather to steady the flight of some brave yoeman's cloth yard shaft at the great battle. In the longer poem, Drayton, besides favouring us with Henry Chicheley's preachment at greater length than even

Shakspere himself, both paraphrasing Hall, obliges his gentle reader with a most bloody minded account of the siege of Harfleur, pithily intimating the extreme valor of the besieging commander after the following homely fashion—

"In all their sights he (Harry Monmouth) sets his army down,
And for their shot *he careth not a pin*,
But seeks where he his battery may begin."

In the ballad, however, there is no time to besiege towns. The song rushes on like fire amongst dry heather. The poet lumps the captivated cities without ceremony, and pounces with the swoop of an eagle on the field of battle.

And taking many a fort,
Furnish'd in warlike sort,
Marcheth towards Agincourt
  In happy hour,
Skirmishing day by day,
With those that stopp'd his way,
Where the French gen'ral lay,
  With all his power.

This is something in the good old English "Sunk, taken, and destroyed, as per margin" style. No useless circumlocution. The king jumps, as Napier hath it, with both feet on any unhappy fortalice that happens

to lay in his way, and having ground it to powder beneath his "armed heel," marches on towards Agincourt "*In happy hour.*" But what sayeth the Frenchman who lies at Agincourt "with all his power?" It had already been decided at Rouen, by a majority of fifty-five to five, that battle should be delivered. Charles D'Albret hath ranged his force, Ban and Arriere Ban, the Knights of Hainault and of Flanders, the chivalry of France and Burgundy, in front of the village of Azincourt. He has little fear of the morrow. He is a Frenchman, and assuredly that excellent nation, whatever else it may want, never wants a most happy spice of self-confidence. Therefore, says Drayton—

Which in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide
  To the King sending,
Which he neglects the while,
As from a nation vile,
Yet *with an angry smile*,
  Their fall portending.

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then,
"Though they to one be ten,
  Be not amazed,

Yet have we well begun,
Battles so bravely won,
Have ever to the sun
By fame been raised."

That "angry smile" of Harry Monmouth's portended little good to the Constable and his chivalry. There must have been a lingering of its dark light on the king's countenance, when he desired his staff to "kill the poys and the luggage," which we agree with the worthy Fluellen was a proceeding *un peu fort;* but then what in the name of St. Dennis could induce Robinet de Bournonville, and Ysambert d'Azincourt, to enter Maisonçelles with their ragamuffins, plunder the baggage, and drive away the horses, just at the very time that the king was still bothered with the third division of the Frenchman's battle in his front? It is enough to anger the most meek spirited of generals, to be taken in the rear after such an unceremonious fashion, and our good king had inhaled with his first breath, on the pleasant banks of Wye, the choleric atmosphere of the Cymri. Perhaps he sufficiently repented him of his haste when he had time, though there appears to be no record on the subject. At all events he sang a Psalm

after the fray, "*In exitu Israel de Egypto,*" which must have been very edifying to all concerned, and no doubt afforded infinite consolation to the ghosts of the ten thousand who had suffered for the impertinence of Robinet de Bournonville and Ysambert d'Azincourt.

Louis Bonaparte had a crude idea, a very odd one for a brother of Napoleon, and which a little hammering might bring into a very startling shape, that military glory was one of the most potent baits with which Sathanas is permitted in these latter days to arm his hooks. Towns burned, countries laid under water, corn-fields trampled, fruit-trees cut down for fuel, innocent people blown into fragments by Congreveian missiles, others starved into eating their own little children without even the relish of that famous sauce under the stimulus of which a man might devour the Pope; these are the ordinary and legitimate standing dishes of a state of warfare, served up by the best behaved and most devout armies in the way of their profession.

Of the *entremets,* murder, pillage, and other little *et cæteras,* which the single soldier of foot or horse tosses up for his own particular consolation, we say nothing; seeing that they are not in the regular *cuisine*

militaire but are simply proffered as stimuli when it is desirable that the gentlemen "who trail the puissant pike," should fall to on the work before them "with a will" as at Magdeberg, Ismail, Badajos, and Gerona.

Now, although both the belligerent parties participate in the amusements above noticed, it is not easy to imagine that they can both enjoy them with equal blamelessness. In other words, though starving three thousand women and children to death may be a hard necessity forced upon any given General Bombastes and his "brave army" which is fighting for the right, it cannot be forced upon the brave army which is fighting for the wrong, inasmuch as that they have no business to fight at all. However, perhaps it may be as well, with those two peripatetic philosophers, Bates and Williams, to lay it "all upon the king," and truly this is not so bad a mode of getting out of the dilemma where the law of conscription, or the press-gang, presents the argument ready made to every bellicose gentleman who draws a trigger or handles a boarding pike. But it is not altogether so available to John Bullock, who *voluntarily* enlists in the hundred and twenty-fourth foot, tempted thereunto partly through distaste

of life engendered by his recent quarrel with Mary Duggins, and partly by the brilliant prospect of three halfpence per diem pocket-money. Still less is that flattering unction for the soul available to the Honorable Mortimer Fitz-Mortimer who enters the fortieth hussars for the sake of nothing on earth but what Mr. Sheridan, in the "Critic," calls "a very fine waistcoat"

After all, the sentiment of that unimpugnable military authority, Captain Dugald Dalgetty, may be considered as the most consolatory and comfortable for all parties. "Storms, onslaughts, massacres," says this worthy individual, "the burning of suburbs, are a soldier's daily work, and are justified by the necessity of the case, seeing that they are done in the course of duty. For burning of suburbs in particular, it may be said that they are traitors and cut-throats to all fortified towns. Hence it is plain, that a soldier's is a profession peculiarly favoured by Heaven, seeing that we may hope for salvation, although we daily commit actions of so great violence."

But return we to the King and his host, to whom his Highness had first communicated the pleasing

intelligence that they were, in comparison with the Frenchmen, as one to ten, exhorting them at the same time to "be not amazed," a thing infinitely less easy to practise than to preach on such occasions; at least it is our humble but earnest impression that the majority of warriors, however pugnaciously disposed, would feel very particularly "amazed" if they were collectively apprized that on the morrow following each was on his own special behoof, and for his own peculiar contentment, to do battle with ten gentlemen armed in proof, and possessing all the will in the world to send their opponent out of it. Not so the King. Like Cæsar, he and danger were

> "Two lions littered in one day,
> And he the elder and more terrible."

To repeat Poly Olbion's words, "He careth not a pin" for the ten to one. Does he not mingle in the tide of warlike blood which fires his heart, that of the Richards, the Edwards and the Henrys? Of that wonderful race of Plantaganet, wise in council, strong in war, the first men amongst a people of heroes? Before whose battle banner the fierce Saracen had quailed, the stubborn Scot recoiled, the kerne of the Emerald Island

[illegible] with Mary [illegible] of three [illegible]. Still less is that [illegible] to the Honor- [illegible] the fiftieth [illegible] for what Mr. [illegible] - [illegible] - [illegible] wrist-

[illegible] of [illegible] miniaturable mili- [illegible] Royal Majesty, may be con- [illegible] and admirable for all [illegible] - says this [illegible] - the journey of subjects, are a [illegible] and are instilled by the necessity [illegible] time in the course of [illegible] of subjects in particular, it may be [illegible] and [illegible] to all forti- [illegible] that a soldier's is a [illegible] by Heaven, seeing that [illegible] although we daily commit [illegible].

But [illegible] we to the King and his host, to who his Highness had first communicated the pleas

[illegible]

[illegible] of [illegible] pertinacious [illegible] very [illegible] "[illegible]" if they [illegible] apprized that on the morrow following [illegible] own special behoof, and for [illegible] ment, to do battle with [illegible] and possessing all the wi[illegible] appearance out of it. No[illegible] and danger were

"Two [illegible]

[illegible]

To repeat [illegible] pin" for the [illegible] of warlike blood [illegible] Richards, the [illegible] wonderful race of [illegible] war, the first men among [illegible] whose battle banner [illegible] stubborn foot recoiled. [illegible]

vanished amidst his mists, and the fiery Frank furled the Oriflame on his native fields of France? Harry Monmouth recollects the deeds done in that same land by his "great uncle, Edward the Black Prince"—

> "While his most mighty father on a hill
> Stood smiling to behold the lion's whelp
> Forage in blood of French nobility,"

and he who could seek Henry Percy and the black Douglas through the fierce tide of war that inundated the field of Shrewsbury, is not a likely man to proffer his sword, hilt foremost, to Charles D'Albret and Antony of Brabant.

> "And for myself" quoth he
> This my full rest shall be,
> England ne'er mourn for me,
> Nor more esteem me.
> Victor I will remain,
> Or on this earth lie slain,
> Never shall she sustain
> Loss to redeem me.
>
> "Poitiers and Cressy tell,
> When most their pride did swell,
> Under our swords they fell,
> No less our skill is;
> Than when our grandsire great
> Claiming the royal seat
> By many a warlike feat
> *Lopp'd the French lilies.*"

Leonidas at old Thermopylæ was not greater. The sentiments of the umqwhile, "nimble footed, mad cap Prince of Wales" are positively Spartan. And then the bold and vivid image of *lopping* the French lilies! but he was just the man to repeat the course of horticulture so successfully practised by his great grandsire in the fields of France. The night before the battle was cold and dreary, the stars gleamed few and faint between the driving clouds, reddened as those were at times by the fires of the vast French bivouac. The damp breezes of autumn swept the wide plain with hollow wailing, "shrill through the hawthorn blew the cold wind," and the numbed soldiers were ever and anon exposed to cutting showers of sleet and rain. We are not speaking of the night before Waterloo, but of the night before the day of Crispin Crispianus.

"To the English," says the historian, "to the English it was a night of hope and fear, of suspense and anxiety. They had been wasted with disease, broken with fatigue, and weakened by the many privations which must attend the march of an army through a hostile country, and in the presence of a superior force. But they were supported by the spirit and con-

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"astonishing infantry," were the same in all ages, and stood in as little awe of the mailed cavalier at Agincourt as at Waterloo.

But hark! the trumpets blow the battle signal, and the banner of England, "*Tres flores aurei et tres leopardi aurei*," according to Elmham, "floats out gloriously on the morning breeze." The king himself appeared on a grey palfrey, followed by a train of led horses ornamented with the most gorgeous trappings. His helmet was of polished steel, surmounted by a crown sparkling with jewels; and on his surcoat were emblazoned in gold the arms of England and France. As he rode from banner to banner, cheering and exhorting the men, he chanced to hear an officer express a wish to his comrade that some of the good knights who were sitting idle in England, might by a miracle be transported to the field of battle.

"No," exclaimed Henry, "I would not have a single man more. If God gives us the victory, it will be plain that we owe it to his goodness; if he do not, the less will be the loss to our country. But fight with your usual courage, and God and the justice of our cause will protect us. Before night the pride of our enemies shall

be humbled in the dust, and the greater part of that multitude shall be stretched on the field, or captives in our power."

'Tis better in Shakspear, who was doubtless furnished by some delicate Ariel of his familiar spirits with the very words of the martial King. But there is no more time for talking;

> "The French are bravely in their battle set."

And "brave York," who cuts a better figure now than as Rutland, or Aumerle, that "dangerous cousin," low on his knee, doth "beg the leading of the vaward." But a few short hours and he shall be lower still. "Thrice within this hour," says the King,

> "Thrice within this hour
> I saw him down, thrice up again and fighting;
> From helmet to the spur all blood he was."

As yet, however, these things are in the womb of time; but had they been shadowed forth by dim hosts encountering in the air, "brave York" was not the knight to lose in honor that he might save in blood.

"Banners advance," cries the king. At the same moment Sir Thomas Erpingham cast his warder "high

in the air," a signal, as it should seem to the archery ambushed in the meadow at Tramecourt on the left flank of the French, and the men, falling on their knees, bit the ground, arose, shouted, and ran towards the enemy.

> The Duke of York so dread,
> The eager vaward led;
> With the main Henry sped,
> Amongst his hench-men;
> Excester had the rear,
> A braver man not there,
> *O Lord, how hot they were*
> *On the false Frenchmen!*

Do you not see them? Do you not see the iron tide of England's war rolling in terrible waves right on the Frenchmen's host? Small is the pomp and glitter of those redoubtable columns. They "are but warriors for the working day." But they are true of heart, strong of hand, confident without boasting; the worthy progenitors of those valiant sons of England —heirs to the long line of the indomitable Briton, the dauntless Saxon, the stubborn Dane, the chivalric Norman,—of whom the poet sings—

"Hers their bold port, and hers their martial frown,
And hers their scorn of death in freedom's cause,
Their eyes of azure and their locks of brown,
And the blunt speech that bursts without a pause,
And free born thoughts which league the soldier with the law.

The worthy progenitors, we repeat were they of those valiant men who carried the war storm and the "Leopards" of England from the rock of Lisbon to the battlement of Toulouse, and from the forest of Soignés to the towers of Notre Dame. And then their leaders!—Henry amidst his Henchmen, York "so dread," Excester "a braver man not there" not our modern clipped English Exeter, title meaningless and spiritless; but the Lord of Excester: the castra or camp upon the Ex, sweet silvery river of green meadows, whence the haughty Roman bridled the wild and martial Dumnoni.

They now to fight are gone,
Armour on armour shone,
Drum now to drum did groan,
To hear, was wonder;
That with the cries they make,
The very earth did shake,
Trumpet to trumpet spake,
Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Which didst the signal aim
  To our hid forces;
When, from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly,
The English archery
  Struck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long,
That like to serpents stung
  Piercing the weather;
None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts
And *like true English hearts,*
  Stuck close together.

Aye, "close together!" Shoulder to shoulder, showering their arrows so that the French might, like the Spartans of old, fight in the shade; a dismal shade for them; Hades, or like "Demagorgon a tremendous gloom." "*Piercing the weather*" too, a terse idea enough of worthy Poly Olbion. But finer still, rising to the sublimity of the battle of the Baltic or Hoenlinden, is the fiery description of that avalanche of cloth yard shafts, which "*like a storm suddenly, struck the French horses.*" We can pity those barbed steeds,

wild with the torture of such terrific gad-flies; masterless, fallen, blinded, screaming, plunging fetlock deep in blood; yerking out their armed heels at disabled despairing riders. And awful too was the plight of those bold knights of France in gilded harness and gorgeous surcoats, as became gentlemen of good quarterings, in that confused bloody mass upon which

> "Poured England's arrow flight like rain,

while

> "Crests rose and sank, and rose again,
> Wild and disorderly."

The Constable had specially handed over the British archers to the tender attentions of a thousand picked men at arms; but, says the Historian, of the whole number not more than seven score ever came into action. How could they, when no armour tempered in mortal stithy was proof against those terrible shafts, that "like to serpents stung?" Those, continues the narrative, alluding to the unhappy seventy, were quickly dispatched; the others, unable to face the incessant shower of arrows, turned their visors aside and lost all government of their horses, which, frantic with pain, plunged in different directions into the close ranks of the first

division. The advantage was not lost upon the English archery, who forthwith put their best leg foremost, with the amiable intention of rendering confusion worse confounded—

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilboes drew,
And on the French they flew,
  Not one was tardy;
Arms were from shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went,
  Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king,
His broad sword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding,
  As to o'erwhelm it;
And many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent,
  Bruised his helmet.

Of course it did; every gallant Frenchman, and there never was any want of gallant Frenchmen, "bruised his helmet" if he could get at it, as in duty bound. It was a fair honest stand-up fight, that delectable gratification to every true born Englishman. In despite of the battered pot upon his head, Harry Monmouth would not have been elsewhere, as Lord Nelson said, "for a

thousand pounds." He stands over stunned Clarence as a lion guards his whelp. Eighteen French knights who made a dead set at the king have gone down, and many a true English heart with them. There is no playing at soldiers *here*. A nineteenth! 'tis the valiant Alençon. With one stroke of his steel mace he beats down the Duke of York, with another he shivers the crown on the king's helmet. Alençon is on his mailed Hainault horse; the king is on foot, or he would, as Athelstone of Coningsborough said, have dealt him such a counter buff as should have spoiled his retreat. But, poor fellow, poor Alençon, it is all one to him for that matter. The crown of England is not to be shivered with impunity. Were there a thousand Alençons in one he is as dead as Diodorus Siculus. Before the king can save his brave foe, who cries quarter, a dozen hot Welchmen with bills and mells rush like a whirlwind to their royal compatriot's rescue, and with clanging Cymri oaths and wild cries have sent the bold Frank to his ancestors' Valhalla. Peace to the brave! Honour to the valiant dead! On, sons of the red cross, and complete the victory won "On the day of Crispin Crispianus."

Glo'ster, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood,
With his brave brother;
Clarence in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight
Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made,
Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his ax did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby,
Bare them right doughtily
Ferrers and Fanhope.

Spirit of chivalry, what a roll of gallant names! Warwick, Oxford, Beaumont, Willoughby! — names which had been heard above the din of battle from the Pyrennees to the Grampians, from the shores of the sea of Galilee and the banks of Kedron, to those of Loch Swilly.

But the French host is shattered into fragments, wildly and vainly struggling with the rush of England's war, before whose mighty sweep those fragments scatter more and more in wild divergence from

each other, like storm clouds when the strength of the gale is breaking—The battle is won—The French herald will come no more for ransom—The might of the realm is struck down—the crown of Pharamond is at the foot of Harry Monmouth "drenched in the blood of French nobility,"—and for Michael Drayton there remains nought to do but to tell us that—

> Upon St. Crispin's day
> Fought was this noble fray,
> Which fame did not delay,
> To England to carry;
> O, when shall English men,
> With such acts fill a pen,
> Or England breed again
> Such a King Harry!

Fare thee well, honest Michael, on whom, singing to the Cambrian Harp, did fall some portion of the old bardish spirit. Well hast thou sung thy bold rough song; rude, perchance, to the moodish, mawkish taste of modern times, for it hath in it none of the philosophy of things; no metaphysics in rhyme; no mighty emotions of the deep passionate and mysterious gloomy in octo-syllabic verse, but is a blunt soldierly

lay which he who runs may read, and reading, feel, that it is an outpouring of the Muse suiting a gallant theme of English hardihood, such as martial Harry's own Laureat would have consecrated to the day of CRISPIN CRISPIANUS.

SKETCHES FROM SHAKSPERIAN TEXTS.

Shakspere.

Great Spirit, from the azure vault of morn,
From caves with talismanic gems empearled,
From haunted glens, whence the blue smoke wreaths curled
Of witchfires, from those desolate isles forlorn,
Where echoes sigh 'midst crags all tempest worn,
Winds swept thy lyre; while round, with wings unfurled,
Stood thoughts, swift ministers, to gird the world
At thy strong bidding, Lord of times unborn.
But deeper than the fountains which outpoured
External nature's wonders to thine eye,
Deeper than the burning caves from whence upsoared
Hags, fiends, and sprites, thou only could'st espy;
Thou sought'st and won, that region unexplored
Man's heart—to all but Thee an awful mystery.

THE VENETIAN PLAYS.

The Merchant of Venice.

Venice, sweet city of romance, though set
Thy star, so long undimmed, thy power departed,
And thou liest desolate and broken hearted,
Thou art imagination's sovereign yet;
And chief of ours, whose matchless bard hath made
Thy glories live till now, in their old pomp arrayed.
His wondrous page brings back thy proudest hours,
The galleys rocking in thy busy port,
The mart of nations, and the world's resort;
The dusky gondola, swift gliding where
The shadow of some princely palace falls,
The torches gleaming on the wave washed stair,
The Adriatic plashing against halls
Of marble and of gold, and murmuring round thy towers.

Othello.

" The Moor !—I know his trumpet."—See the smile
Of glad affection kindle his bold eyes,
As to his noble heart he clasps a prize
Worth all the treasures of " The Warlike Isle."
The Moor !—A shadow hath passed o'er his soul,
He looks upon that gentle lady now
With haggard glance, clenched hands, and knitted brow,
While down her sweet pale cheek the tears unbidden roll.
The Moor ! stands he alone within the gloom
Of that dim chamber ?—would he *were* alone !
Follow his burning looks as they are thrown
On yonder innocent sleeper, speaking doom.
The dagger gleams—vain are her stifled cries,
Blessing her cruel lord, poor Desdemona dies.

The Roman Plays.

Hark to the trumpets of magnificent Rome
Sounding her march over the necks of nations,
Pealing her fame to unborn generations.
Lo! the Tarpeian rock; and there the dome
Of the Capitoline Jupiter, outrolled
In the Italian sky, a cloud of burning gold.
High in the crystal air, on many a pile
Of variegated marble, gardens smile,
Where senators, in snowy robes arrayed,
Hold converse grave of Parthian battles won,
Or whisper "He has passed the Rubicon,"
By clear cool fountains in the plane trees' shade.
Thence turn we to the yellow Tiber's side,
Threading the streets of Rome, with Shakspere for our guide.

Julius Cæsar.

"Here comes his body, mourned by Mark Antony."

The Forum hath no voice.—But time has been
When the divinity of eloquence
Poured forth his burning oracles from thence
To the charmed world—Arise again great scene
Of wondrous deeds—Hark to that hollow sound
Like the muttering of thunder, or the roar
Of ocean smitten by a tempest!—Out they pour
From every street, the tribes of Rome, and round
The rostrum swarm; then still as death they stand
Gazing on one in whose Majestic mien,
And glance tamed down to suppliance from command,
We see the future slave of Egypt's queen.
He points beneath him to a bloody bier,
His words—Lo! Shakspere gives them to our ear.

Hamlet.

———" I will watch to night:
Perchance 'twill walk again."

Will it then walk to night? and shall he see
The shadowy image of the mighty dead?
Shall the stern tomb yield up her mystery
And o'er night's noon a deeper horror shed?
Hush!—'Tis the creaking of the turret vane
In the damp sea breeze. Hush!—'tis but the roar
Of hollow waves that flow and ebb again
Across the pebbly beach of Elsinore.
How goes the night?—it is a fitting time
To meditate on death, on woe, and crime.

The stars are out, but shimmering faint and dim
Like the dull eyes of spirits—In the haze
Rising from the cold sea, they seem to swim,
Few, solitary, shorn of their clear rays,
And lustreless. The chilly midnight air

Sighs through the long grass on the antient walls,
Stirring the black firs and the Linden trees
Heavily, as hearse-plumes wave at funerals.
Thrice shrieks the owl far off—then all is still
Save the faint echo from the cold bleak hill.

How many a wretch at this most silent hour
Pierces the darkness with his dying scream,
How many a captive in the dungeon tower
Shrinks from the fate that comes with morning's beam,
How many a lone and broken heart looks forth
Upon the quiet stars and prays to be
In that last home, where happiness and worth
Rest not more calm than vice or misery—
Ha!—Mercy Heaven!—see!—behold it glide!
HAMLET, thy father's ghost is at thy side.

Hamlet.

"Whose grave's this, sir?"

The grave! for whom?
What traveller on life's solemn path has won
The quiet resting-place?—Whose toil is done?
Who cometh to the tomb?

Is it the sage,
Who, through the vista of a life well passed,
Looked calmly forward to this lone, this last,
This silent hermitage?

Is it the brave,
The laurelled soldier of a hundred fields,
To whom the land he nobly warred for, yields
A nation honored grave?

Doth the matron come,
Whom many bright-eyed mourners of her race
Will weep for, looking on her vacant place
By the hearth of their sad home?

The Grave!—Alas!
It opens not its marble arms for one
Who timely sinks, the day of life being done,
As withered flowers pass.

'Tis not the oak,
Which, grey and mossy, falls beneath the breath
Of the December tempest, or the scathe
Of the red lightning's stroke.

'Tis not the grain
Ripe for the sickle, which the reaper's blade
Hath in the season's fulness cut, and laid
Upon the harvest wain.

No, nor the leaves,
Hanging like rubies in the atmosphere,
Of which sweet nature for the parting year,
Her farewell chaplet weaves.

In their full day,
Not when the spring-cloud floats above green hills,
Or summer makes more musical the rills,
Those timely pass away.

Not in the prime
Of the rejoicing, clear-eyed morn, but when
The shades of twilight cloak the silent glen
At the last curfew's chime.

Heaven above
Foreshows the end of what it doth create
By natural signs. Thus warn'd, we bear the fate
Of whom, and what we love.

As the year fades,
Brown is the forest, hoarser rolls the flood,
O'er the cold sky low drifts a wilder scud,
Winds sweep the leafless glades.

When the day dies,
Not unannounced comes the dark starry night,
To purple twilight melts the golden light
Of the resplendent skies.

And man, too, bears
The warning signs upon his furrowed cheek,
In his dimmed eye, and silvered hair, which speak
The twilight of our years.

But oh, 'tis grief!
To part with those who still upon their brow,
Bear life's spring garland, with hope's sunny glow
On every verdant leaf.

To see the rose
Opening her fragrant glories to the light,
Half bud, half blossom, touched by the cold blight,
And perish ere it blows.

To see the stream,
Whose sweet and silvery course we hoped to trace
To the great ocean, parched in its bright race,
By the fierce dog-star's beam.

But wherefore weep!
Happy are those who, ere they yet have proved
The little worth of what their young hearts loved,
Sleep the unbroken sleep.

To them 'tis given
To sink to rest amidst delicious dreams,
That all on earth is lovely as it seems,
And wake again in Heaven.

As You Like It.

"Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court."

A leafy rustling fills the noontide air,
And the glad humming of the forest bee
Who o'er sweet wild flowers wakes her minstrelsy,
While the fresh gushing stream makes music rare
Soothing the mind, till every thought of care
Fades like the furrow from a summer sea.
Who would not live in forests?—Doth the pall
Of purple, gold, and ermine, shine so bright
As the blue sky and sparkling waterfall?
Do kings and courtiers, with all splendours dight,
In perfumed banquet halls feel that delight
Which the pure forest breeze here yields to all?
We want but Rosalind; with such a maid
'Twere Heaven to dwell in the calm greenwood shade.

As You Like It.

Yes—'tis the bold voice of the hunter's horn
That gladly ringing through those leafy brakes
Cheers dawn; and, sparkling from the budding thorn,
Shakes the clear crystals that the night dew makes;
There have I seen the "Melancholy Jacques,"
What time the evening sunshine poured a flood
Of light through the green leaves, that with their shade
On the short sward a restless chequer made,
Holding communion with the solitude;
And from stones, streams, and flowers, in his mood,
Drawing quaint morals, which but teach at last
That things which are will perish like things past:
A truth that all may learn, and yet not scorn
Life and its healthful joys, the chase and hunting horn.

As You Like It.

"Under the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me?"

I pause upon the page, and as I muse
Green silent glades, and forest dells arise,
And leafy clumps of oaks, before my eyes;
While a refreshing sense of the soft dews
Of early spring and gentle summer showers,
Steals o'er my fancy, till I see the flowers
Decked in the diamonds of the atmosphere,
As o'er Ardenne's deep woods the day breaks silvery clear.
Then far off in the verdant solitude
Float the faint echoes of a bugle's sound,
From his lair of fern springs upwards with a bound
The startled stag, and gazes through the wood—
Stay pleasant vision—'tis in vain—'tis past
Around me roars again, the burning* Indian blast.

* Written in Bengal.

"Grimstone," added another, "was as able a seaman as ever handled a reef point—but it was not for the good of any ship's company to sail with him. A pretty deal of salt water have I run over in my time, and had some queer shipmates, as you may partly suppose, seeing that I have followed the sea, man and boy the best part of forty years; but the like of that Grimstone I never came athwart of before, I mean for swearing and blasphemy. It seemed as if his oaths would sink the very ship under him, or bring up the black devil to claw him out from the midst of his mess—well—Lord forgive him! he has been suddenly called to his account."

John Grimstone, the subject of this conversation, had indeed been permitted but a brief space for that repentance which he seemed to need but too much—he had fallen from the main-top gallant-mast, while assisting to send down the royal yards about midday—and the crushed and mangled state of his body rendered it but too evident that he could not have survived the fatal instant he touched the booms upon which he fell. Independent of those solemn and melancholy reflections which the accident of the morning, and the mournful office just concluded, were calculated to excite in a small

community; we had a more immediate and serious cause for the gloom which seemed to rest like a shadow of coming evil upon the crew and passengers of the Milford. It was the latter end of May — we were about three degrees and a half to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, in latitude thirty-nine degrees south, and the weather had assumed an appearance which made us wish ourselves anywhere rather than in the precise position we then occupied. Glimmerings of lightning had been more than once observed in the north-west. The sky overhead was grey and dreary, while the horizon was rendered nearly invisible by the thick increasing haze which rested heavily upon the long heaving billows. The sea itself was as gloomy as the heavens which canopied it, for the swell setting from the westward, rose and fell dark and silent as a starless midnight, without a single streak of foam to chequer or relieve the glassy expanse of waters, which heaved up in dusky hills, or sunk in shadowy vallies around our lonely vessel.

"What do you think of the weather, Benson?" said I to the first officer, as he descended from the poop, where he had been conversing with our excellent Captain.

"Oh!" replied the young sailor with a laugh, which was, however, more brief and less cheerful than usual, "we must get our tubs on deck to catch fresh water;" and so saying entered the awning cabin, which the captain kept for his own accommodation, and where his chronometers and other instruments of navigation were deposited.

I was aware of the object with which Benson visited the captain's cabin, and when, after a delay of a few seconds, he again came on the quarter deck; I inquired with a degree of interest which I endeavoured to disguise by an appearance of extreme nonchalance, how the barometer looked?

"Queer enough," replied the seaman, with a shrug and an elevation of the eye-brows, as he past hastily by me and ascended the poop ladder to his commander.

This was far from consolatory, but there was little use in giving way to the unpleasant feelings which that brief communication was calculated to inspire; so mustering all the philosophy I could command, I betook myself, and a cane chair, to the cuddy port, and by the light of the declining day, commenced a vigorous perusal of the third volume of Waverly, several sentences of

which ought assuredly to be impressed upon my memory, as I believe I read each page at least a dozen times. At this period an almost perfect stillness rested on the Milford. Two of the passengers leaned listlessly over the gangway rail, watching in silence the heaving mass of water as it rose and fell in long heavy undulations. A third lying with his head resting on his arms upon the cuddy table, appeared very enviably asleep, while the sound of a flute, coming faintly up the companion ladder, gave evidence by a doleful attempt at "Home, sweet Home, that a musical cadet was not to be attracted or intimidated from his usual afternoon's practice by the scene around us, or the dangers that it prognosticated. With this harmonious exception, the silence on board of the vessel was only broken by the heavy flap of the reduced sails, as the ship rolled slowly and deeply from side to side, by the continuous wearysome creaking of the masts and driver boom, or by an occasional question from the quarter deck, as "Does she steer?" "How is her head?" and such brief replies from the helmsman as were necessary. But we were not doomed to remain very long in suspense. The gale seemed but to await the departure of the sun, whose setting was only indi-

cated by a lurid gleam towards the west, before it took tyrannous and undivided possession of sea and sky. For, as the gloom of twilight thickened, heavy moaning gusts began to sweep across the surface of the ocean; lulls of a few minutes would then occur, with a stifling absence of wind, which was perceptible in spite of the coldness of the weather; and at length, as the last streak of daylight faded in the gloomy obscurity of the horizon, that sublime but appalling description of a storm, a Cape North-wester, rushed forth from its cavern in the clouds with wings of thunder like a giant on his prey. Our good ship was well prepared for the encounter, but ere she answered her helm, and fell off before the fury of the first tremendous gust, she gave a lurch or two from which I scarcely expected her to recover, and reeled and staggered in the shock of the tempest like a tower battered by a mighty artillery. At length she was got before the wind, and in less than two hours the wild sea, through which she rushed with the velocity of a new shot arrow, had risen into those mountains of water which none can conceive who have not witnessed a storm off the Cape of Good Hope. Our ship, as I have said, was a stout and gallant bark, well

officered and sound, and luckily for us she was so; for as she hove her groaning timbers above the mighty seas, which broke on board like cataracts, it appeared to me that no vessel less strong or less buoyant could have shaken off the weight of that deluge under which even the lively and well-built Milford trembled like a reed in a running stream. Our Captain, an old and approved seaman, looked grave and anxious. I could see him from the cuddy, where the serious faces of a silent group of passengers looked pale and sad in the dim flickering light of the swinging lamp: his hat had been blown off, but he seemed careless or unconscious of the circumstance; and his grey hair was streaming to the blast, that drove before it a cutting torrent of cold rain, of which he appeared equally regardless. At times he left his station near the wheel and went forward into the obscurity of the quarter deck, and now and then his deep voice was heard from amidst the gloom rising above the roar of the blast in accents of cheerful encouragement, which sounded strangely to our ears, or of caution, which struck a responsive chord in our hearts. But anon, the howlings of the tempest would drown every voice but its own, and even the clank of the chain

pumps sounded dull and distant, or as if they had been muffled. Thus we remained counting each stormy minute as it passed, silent and anxious, but putting the best countenance we could on the matter, and occasionally attempting to turn the current of our ideas by talking on indifferent subjects; at one moment we endeavoured to persuade ourselves that the blasts were less violent, and the next, some one of our company would assert roundly that they were assuredly less frequent. Thus then passed the dreary hours until near midnight; not only in considerable mental anxiety, but attended by all those bodily discomforts which a heavy gale of wind inflicts on the unfortunate landsman. The cuddy knee deep in water, dashing from side to side with a sound far from cheering, the eternal "fetching way" of articles meant to remain stationary, and, to all appearance, lashed and cleeted until they seem as permanently fixed as the deck itself. Falls, grazes, contusions, and above all that most fatiguing, and at the same time ludicrous operation of embracing an upright post, or clinging to the table as a refractory cat does to a hearth rug; to all that class of petty distresses which, by the way, we should think serious enough at

any other time, one may add helplessly gazing at a few recherchè and choicely bound books, floating to and fro in the brine like the wrecks of the Trojan fleet; and a favourite Amati violoncello, or choice violin, trying conclusions with the nearest chest of drawers or bulk-head, as it sports on the summit of that minature sea which inundates your cabin; thus, however, passed our hours until eight bells, sounding as faint through the roar of the blast as though they were tolled a mile from the ship, announced midnight. At that period Captain N—— came in for some refreshment. He observed gravely that there was a very heavy squall coming up, and had just lifted the tumbler to his lips, when a cry from the deck of "a strange sail right a head," caused him to hurry out of the cuddy; and it may readily be imagined that, in spite of the inclemency of the night, the gentlemen of the party there assembled, lost very little time in following his example. In fact, we obeyed the instructions given by Lady Macbeth, to her guests at Scone, to the very letter. We "stayed not upon the order of our going, but went at once." I have a faint impression that during my transit over the dinner table I knocked down an ancient Civil servant, returning to

Bengal, and also the bottles and glasses which were quietly balancing on a swing tray,—and I more perfectly remember that I found myself jammed between a tall Irish cadet and a stout assistant surgeon of the Royals, in the narrow door-way leading from the cuddy to the quarter deck. Moreover, that by a general convulsive exertion we all burst through that Thermopylæ at once, and with an ejaculatory hah! of that sort which seems to give such infinite relief to a London pavior, or an elderly gentleman receiving a punch in the vicinity of his gastric region. The Irishman afterwards compared our sortie to the vivacious escape of a certain liquid which he was pleased to denominate pop; but at the moment of our bursting forth, all feelings, all ideas, were absorbed in astonishment, and I do not hesitate to add fear, at the sight which presented itself. We had men on board who had distinguished themselves in the most fiery bursts of the Peninsular war, particularly Colonel W——, of the ——, now at Bangalore. Others who have since earned no mean renown in the battle fields of India—but if one of those were hardy enough to assert that its pulse kept its even beat, and his cheek its natural hue, as he looked upon the sight before us,

I should say that it was more than untrue, it was physically and morally impossible. The night was awful. It could not be called dark, for the blaze of lightning in which the masts seem to tremble, and the whole ship to quiver, scarcely ceased for a single instant; but when it *did* cease, darkness is too feeble a term for the utter palpable blackness which ensued, and which seemed as if it had blotted out the fairness and beauty of creation for ever. I know not whether it thundered, for the loudest claps that ever rattled through the cloudy masses of an Indian north-wester, would have been inaudible amidst the howlings of the terrific gale to which we were exposed. The ocean, as its giant waves rose high above the vessel, and then rushed down again like falling avalanches, glittered and weltered far and wide, in the gleam of the white lightning, as if it were a sea of molten lead; while the spray, as it flew across the ship, or was hurled up in vast clouds by the near breaking of some billow more monstrous than the rest, shimmered and wavered in the same unearthly light, like the sulphury vapour of a volcano. The ship laboured frightfully. At one moment her quarter was buried by the volume of water which some bursting sea

hurled over our bulwarks; the next, her tall masts were seen describing a gigantic arc as they appeared to fly across the flashing heavens, and her opposite side received the assault of a fresh and equally terrible invader. Now her bowsprit would rise high in air, and again both bowsprit and forecastle would plunge into an abyss of foam, from which it appeared almost impossible that they should ever emerge.

I recollect these things *now;* but at the time every faculty was absorbed in the contemplation of a more terrible and more extraordinary spectacle than either the raging storm or the wild ocean. Right a-head, broadside on, and apparently not fifty yards from our bow, lay a vessel equal in length to a China ship, such as the East India Company then sailed, of the largest class; she had a lofty carved and elaborately ornamented stern, so broad at the base and so narrow at the summit as nearly to resemble a pyramid. From this projected three heavy balustrades or stern galleries, supported by fantastic images; while an equal number of tall and bulky poop lanthorns crowned the edifice—from the extreme summit, or what we should call the poop, there were two stages or stories, if I may so term

them, to be descended before reaching the quarter deck, which was of course considerably shortened by the encroachments of the decks above, and was probably not less than from fifteen to eighteen feet lower than the highest part of the poop. The waist of this singular vessel did not appear to be higher out of the water than that of our own five hundred ton ship; but her cumbrous forecastle was exalted almost to an equality with the second story or deck of the stern, and descended with proportionate abruptness to form the head and cutwater. The latter, elevated but a few feet above the sea, supported on its whole length a rampant and shield-bearing white lion, whose head rose considerably higher than the cutwater itself, while his hind feet seemed resting on the surface of the ocean: finally, the hull of the stranger fell in above and bulged out towards the water-line to a degree which would have made the similar build in some of our oldest battle ships look quite moderate; while rows of long slender cannon bristling forth from oval ports, wherever from the forecastle to the highest poop there was a foot of deck to sustain them, denoted her claim to be considered as a vessel of force.

The masts, of which she had three, were scarcely so

lofty as our own, and each was encumbered with two heavy circular projections, one where the main-tops are situated in modern ships, and another of smaller dimensions, at what we should call the cross-trees; both were surrounded by curiously carved fanciful railings; nor was a similar description of accommodation wanting to the bowsprit, which, after projecting as in modern ships some distance from the bow, suddenly rose vertically at an obtuse angle with its first direction and supported, about half way up, not only the round top adverted to, but the yards, sails, and rigging of a diminutive mast. The sails of the stranger, for she appeared to have hove too under a press of canvas, were much deeper and narrower than any I had ever seen; and a kind of gigantic latine sail, set on a yard of immense length, reaching fore and aft across the mizen mast, and descending to the quarter deck, performed the office of a driver.

The confusion and apprehension which this strange spectacle naturally created on board of the Milford, is not to be described. When I had contrived by desperate clinging, and at the expense of some bruises, to scramble up the poop, my ears were saluted, not only by the howlings of the tempest, the rattling of blocks and

cordage, and the roar of the sea, but by a confusion of tongues, which, for a moment, rose above the noise of the elements.

"We're on board of her, by Heaven!" cried one. "Hard up, hard up," shouted another. "Starboard for God's sake!" roared a third, in a voice of bitter agony, while some cried for mercy under the terror of instant dissolution, and others, though standing rigid as statues, with clasped hands and straining eye-balls, howled as wildly as the fierce blast that mingled with their screams, from the sheer influence of mortal apprehension.

"No fear, no fear," said the deep and awe-struck voice of an old seaman close to me. "No fear, you'll not run over *her*."

"No, no," replied another, slowly and solemnly. "Living ship will never get foul of *her* rigging, till that day when the sea"———

"Silence!" cried the Captain, whose opinion I could not but suspect coincided with that of the two last speakers if it was not so plainly expressed. "Silence! and mind your steering — quarter deck there — Mr. Benson, stand by the men at the weather wheel—

steady and no noise,"—this last command was implicitly obeyed, for the terror and wonder excited by our not nearing the stranger, although she was hove too almost under our bowsprit, and we were literally flying through the water, tongue-tied those whom even Captain N—'s authority might not have been sufficient to restrain under such trying circumstances. It was now also that the furious squall which had brought up, or accompanied our awful visitor beginning to clear off, we could discern a vast company upon her decks. They were clad in pale habiliments of that antique form which contemporary portraits and other paintings assign to the hardy navigators of the United Provinces, who, with Hudson, and Bheering, and Jansens, carried the flag of Holland amongst the freezing tides of the Pole, or upheld its honour in the narrow seas, under the renowned De Ruyter and Van Tromp. A few of those dreary looking figures were leaning over the low bulwark of their vessel which was nearest to our bow, and appeared to be silently gazing at some object invisible to us; but by far the greater portion of the dismal crew were engaged in walking silently and solemnly to and fro on the several decks, or were setting in sad and disconsolate

attitudes on the guns. This we could clearly discover for when the broad glare of the lightning ceased, the three tall poop lanthorns of the fearful stranger cast such a cold light over her crowded but stilly decks, as a winter's moon sheds upon a frost fog. By this ghastly illumination, and with the aid of an excellent Dolland, which by the way I scarcely dared raise to my eye, I saw that the faces of the dreary crew were as bloodless and their eyes as lustreless as those of the dead. One turned his marble visage towards the Milford, raising it slightly at the same time, and so withering—yet so devoid of life—so fiendish, yet so fixed was the expression, that I was glad to remove with all haste the telescope, in the very tube of which the horrible glance seemed to encounter mine.

Suddenly a cry arose on board of the Milford, that there was a boat on the starboard quarter, and our attention was of course instantly attracted to that side. There indeed was a boat, living and dashing through a sea which would have sunk or broken up the stoutest and best craft ever launched from Deal Beach in twenty seconds; she was a bluff-bowed, heavy-built cutter, grey and rugged as the useless remains of those fishing

smacks we sometimes see left to rot under the cliffs of Broadstairs or Eastbourne, and pulled by six hands clad in the spectral livery of that awful ship's company. They had the same fixed and stony looks, the same narrow-brimmed high-crowned hats, the same amplitude of button covered trunk hose and jacket, the same fashion of peaked beard and upturned moustache, and the same charnel-house expression of visage and death-like gravity of demeanour. In the stern sheets, was a grisly coxswain, whose sad and awful countenance seemed that of a worn and ancient man—before him sate one differing in appearance from the rest, and whose face and figure were alike hidden from our observation by a coarse shroud-like covering, re-sembling a seaman's hammock. All this we saw distinctly by a sort of bluish hazy light which surrounded the rugged boat, as if it were a luminous atmosphere, formed by the phosphrescent particles which she dashed up with the spray that boiled round her broad bow and heavy gunwale. Silently and swiftly did the ghastly shallop shoot past our vessel, and pull alongside of that to which she evidently belonged. Two or three of the figures, who were gliding about

the stranger's deck, moved heavily towards the gangway port, and two manned the side, as if to receive the passenger in the boat; but the rest maintained their solemn deliberate walk to and fro, without turning their heads or casting a glance at what was in progress. Slowly, and with extreme reluctance, as it appeared to us, did the muffled form rise from his seat in the boat and begin to ascend the side of the ghostly bark; as he stepped across the gangway, the covering which had enveloped him dropped from his figure, and at the same instant the old seaman by my side shouted with a voice of horror, and an oath too terrible to be repeated: "by —— that is John Grimstone."

At this moment, the storm raged with redoubled fury. The lightning became absolutely blinding, and now for the first time the sound of the thunder predominated over the howlings of the gale, and rattled in one unbroken peel like a continued discharge of heavy artillery close to our ears. A tremendous sea struck the Milford, and, with a stunning crash, away went the bowsprit and all the starboard bulwarks, fore and aft; while the fore and main-top masts, after tottering for a second, were hurled over the side into the flashing

ocean. At the same instant, as if to meet and wrestle with the tempest, the spectre ship hove her bluff and mighty bows right up into the wind, encountering the mountain billows and scattering them into a sheet of foam, as dense and vast as the smoke of a great besieging battery. Her yards were silently squared—a cloud of canvas, such as would stagger a frigate in the north-east trade, was displayed below and aloft—and she shot away right against and, as I may say, in the very teeth of the furious blast with the velocity of a swallow skimming over a summer lake—we could only observe, as she dashed close by us at this frightful rate, that the lightning glimmered through every worn sail, as if it were gauze; and that the ghastly crew continued their solemn heavy walk to and fro on the decks, without casting a single glance at our vessel as they passed. In a few minutes the lanthorns ceased to be visible, and every man on the Milford's poop drew a long sighing breath, as if a mountain had been removed from his breast: the gale also had moderated with extraordinary rapidity. The clouds were broken in many places, and the calm beautiful stars looked glittering forth by twos and threes at the openings in the curtains in the tempest.

"Mr. Benson," cried the Captain, "pipe all hands to clear the wreck," and as the sprightly whistle of the boatswain and his mates sounded cheerily through the decreasing gale, he turned to Colonel W—— and said, "we may all be thankful that it is no worse; few ships have come off so easily after meeting

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN."

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF GHOSTS.

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF GHOSTS,

WITH THE HISTORY OF CERTAIN APPARITIONS WHICH AFFLICTED THE AUTHOR.

Addressed to Doctor John Grant, of the Bengal Medical Service.

"Ombra adorata aspetta."—*Romeo e Gulietta.*
"Fly not yet."—*Thomas Moore.*
"Alas! poor Ghost."—*Hamlet.*
"Going—going—gone."—*Any Auctioneer.*

I.

Why should we sing of men and their misdeeds,
When mighty nature in her silent strength
Gives us more noble themes? First the heart bleeds
For human pain and misery: but at length
Grows callous as fresh woe to woe succeeds:—
I mean in our dark poems and romances,
(Heaven forbid't should be so in real life,)
Where all the griefs the unhappy author fancies
Move one no more than parting with one's wife.

II.

The time is past, too, when the mysteries
Of wild Udolpho made the cold flesh creep;
Or sentimental bachelors, with knees
Of breeches half unbuttoned, lost their sleep
To snivel over Werter's snivellings—these
Were glorious days indeed; the author then,
Ambitious of lugubrious renown,
Had but in blood or tears to dip his pen
To terrify, to move, to win the town.

III.

And are ye gone, for ever, blessed hours?
Alas for ever! is the sad reply,
Grub-street re-echoes it from all her bowers,
Romance-renowned Minerva heaves a sigh,
(I mean the press, not goddess,)—Oh ye powers!
Who erst inspired sweet Matilda Dacres,
And raised as many ghosts for Matthew Lewis
As would have frightened forty undertakers,
And have ye gone from earth? Alas! how true is

IV.

The observation of some learned Theban
That science is imagination's bane;
A truth which as true romance readers we ban,
But yet, ah us! the fact is very plain;
You might as well attempt to move mount Leban
On—as to persuade Sir Humphry Davy,
Or Mr. Brand, or Faraday, or Hatchet,
That men e'er made the alkahest to save ye,
Or fix'd a shadow so that you might catch it.

V.

They'd tell you that the grave lights, which of old
Frighten'd good people into fits of ague,
Are merely gas—and if upon the world
You see a ghastly gleam, it need not plague ye.
'Tis carburetted hydrogen you're told;
And don't be frighten'd if, when left alone,
Blue burns your lamp and dim is the inustion;
Expect to see no ghost, to hear no groan,
'Tis but the imperfection of combustion.

VI.

Star-crowned Science, thou indeed hast made
Thy throne upon those prejudices old,
Which on the human mind like nightmares weigh'd,
Appalled the timid and disturbed the bold.
Foul superstition sought their deadly aid,
(Deadly, indeed, to ends like hers applied,)
Wrought with credulity her purpose dark
As at the stake where Urban Grandier died,
As where her vanquish'd foes murder'd the Maid of Arc.

VII.

Foe of philosophy and of his kind,
How oft the grim Dominican has strained
The accursed rack, till crushed in heart and mind
The victim deem'd himself the thing he feign'd;
Confessed dark leagues with fiends who ride the wind,
Or that he bartered his eternal weal
For power on earth. The ravings were received
As awful proofs, and bloody was the seal,
Which stamp'd them true—men shudder'd and believ'd.

VIII.

Then did the Andalusian peasant see,
While star-light struggled with the silvery morn,
Forth from the ruin'd mosque gleam ghastily
Unearthly lights. The Saxon heard the horn
Which the Black Jager wound as furiously.
The hellish chase swept through the midnight wood;
The fiery Gael, upon the lonely heath,
Dreaded to meet the Fairy multitude;
The wild Milesian heard the Benshee's cry of death.

IX.

Effulgent Science! it was thine to chase
Those dark beliefs which hagg'd a trembling world;
Before thy searching glance the dismal race
Of shadows, from their dim dominion hurled,
Lost foot by foot each ancient resting place.
Dreaming Astrology resigned to thee
The starry empire she so long abused;
Thy beams dispersed the mists of Alchemy,
And mercy reigned where science was diffused.

X.

Stay faith! she should do good, for all the harm
She has done the dismal and the timid-hearted,
Who love a little delicate alarm
From which I fear we daily more are parted.
The ghosts our grandsires loved no longer charm.
There's no such "stopper," no, Baalphœgor take her,
Not law to justice, truth to special pleaders,
Measure and weight to tailor and to baker,
As this same science is to romance readers.

XI.

For who on earth, after a course of lectures
Attended at the Royal Institution,
Could tremble at a tale of moving pictures
Of goblins and of mysteries Rosicrucian;
Why, miss of twelve years old would pass her strictures.
"Really, such trash is fit but for the nursery:"
In short we're spoilt for the mystic and the terrible.
Even our glorious Scott, the remark is cursory,
Could scarcely render his "White Lady," bearable.

XII.

'Tis this alone has stopped what I intended,
The publication in nine volumes quarto,
Of a kind of "Vathek," rather more extended,
Filled with the eastern lore which I in part owe
To three weeks' residence at Budge, Budge, blended
With horror, witchcraft, mystery, love and murder;
And such descriptions! how on the bright river
Rich "bungalows" came sailing: who ere heard or
Told such things as I'd have told you—ever

XIII.

Excepting Lady Morgan *—I'd prepared ye
An Orient tale with India for my stage;
Ghouls and Afreets had passed across and scared ye,
In any but this thrice incredulous age.
Mighty enchantments, too, I had not spared ye;
Peris had floated by on golden clouds,
Or glittered down to earth upon the ray
Of the red dog-star, robed in sparkling shrouds,
Woven from the moonlight dews of Himalay.

* See "The Missionary."

XIV.

From where by vast Ustachul in the west
Superb Jabilsa lifts her ruby towers;
To golden-walled Jabilka, on whose crest
The morning sun-beams burst, it had been ours
To wander. We had sought the spicy nest
Where the bright Kaknoos sings upon his pyre,
And Hoosh with all its ghastly multitude,
And Tabat's hill of melodies and fire,
And found the Simoorgh old in her dread solitude.

XV.

And then should I have shewn you how of old
The Mogul kept his state in gorgeous halls,
Vast, shadowy, crusted thick with gems and gold;
Or sooth'd by the fresh gush of waterfalls,
And rills which over pearl and jasper roll'd,
Reposed beneath thick bowers of jasmine,
Mingled with Persian roses, while around him
Stood beauties, bright and still as stars that shine
In summer skies, to fan his sleep—confound him.

XVI.

Men swore that when he oped his eyes, the sun
Wink'd at the lustre of those royal peepers;
That not until he closed them could the dun
Night, fall for benefit of other sleepers;
And that to meet his smile the comets run,
Making a bolt whene'er they saw him frown;
That the sphere's harmonies were out of tune
If they beheld His Majesty cast down,
Whose mouth was "like a meem," * whose face was like the moon.

XVII.

We had review'd his armies, muster'd all
The dusky bands which march'd beneath his banner,
From flowery Cashmeer to green Bengal;
From Delhi to where ocean breezes fan her,
Or used to fan; and then at even fall

* The Arabic "meem," I presume; a thing like a musical semibreve, to which the Persian poets, with their usual felicity of comparison, liken a handsome mouth!

We'd seen the "Sky Lamp's" flickering blaze reveal
The anxious crowds which met beneath its beam;
Heard the imperial nobut's thundering peal,
And mark'd the mighty camp spread like a troubled stream.

XVIII.

"But what's an eastern tale without a ghoul,
A little witchcraft, an afreet, and ghost:
A spirit in some cavern heard to growl,
A diamond palace, a magnetic coast?
All which would doubtless make the critics howl
In matter-of-fact and scientific days
Like these:"—I thought, and in despair I threw
My beautiful MS. into the blaze,
So Science has to answer for that too.

Thus wrote I, my dear John Grant, and thou didst usher my small lay into the world in the spring-time of a friendship which will, I trust, flourish greenly through all the seasons of life; defying the withering power of the tropical sun, and if storms should arise, becoming like the Pine of Clan Alpine, rooted the firmer, "the harder it blows."

As fellow-travellers in the realms of imagination, you and I may almost regret that process which my rhymes attempted to describe. Yet even since the day when those were conceived, our little domain of Faerie, surrounded on all sides by the ocean of science, has become more and more circumscribed, till like a tale written on the sands, each wave of the advancing tide threatens to obliterate it for ever.

I know not whether we have reason to thank philosophy or not for the revolution she has effected; of course there can exist but one opinion as to the inestimable benefit she has conferred on the human race, in rescuing mankind from the cruelties of superstition; but could she not have been contented to stop there? Alas! no; like an ambitious victor, she was satisfied with no conquest less than absolute; and having stormed the citadel, she now hurries to plant her triumphant standard alike on the lonely moor, the blue misty mountain, in the autumn grove, on the ruins of the old abbey, and by our winter firesides. In short, philosophy makes endless war upon one of the most precious prerogatives of our imagination, because she sees in it a trace of that power whose strength for evil

she has broken: and without the slightest compassion for the innocent nature of our tacit resistance to her laws, she insists that we shall relinquish this last remnant of the "wisdom of our ancestors," and cease to believe in ghosts.

Truly it is hard to call upon us for the sacrifice of a sensation, when the enlightenment and politeness of the age have left us so few; and *that* the sensation of ghostly apprehension, which has stood so deservedly high in the list of intellectual pleasing pains, as the assembly of ten thousand circles round the fires of fifty years ago, while the winter storm raged without, for the mere purpose of indulging in the dubious horrors of spectral narrations, sufficiently established. Besides, to all persons of imagination, a belief in disembodied spirits was an exquisite stimulus, stronger, cheaper, and more elegant than sal volatile itself. Fancy the delight of your ruined Abbey, where you are forced, man and horse, to take shelter from the tempest. Fancy your thunder-storm, the waving boughs of the traditionary yew, the dull toll of a bell, so faint that the beating of your own heart almost prevents it from being audible. Is it the distant village clock sounding

the hour of midnight through the storm? No! slow and solemn it floats over the ancient graves like a warning of woe to come; it is the passing knell borne by the rain-driving gusts up the long dark aisle of that solitary ruin. At such moments what are the creature discomforts of the outward man? The wet great coat; the nose so cold that your fingers are uncertain as to its identity; the drenched hat, which performs the office of an aqueduct for the conveyance of the chilly element down your shrinking back; nay, even the contrast between your actual state and that which you had proposed to yourself in the snug, warm, and well-lighted parlour, with a brace of pheasants and a bottle of old port before you—all, all are forgotten in the absorbing interest of your situation. What deed of blood is to be disclosed? What injured nun, with one finger on her pale lips and a lamp in her livid hand—but why should I pursue so delightful a dream? Alas! if a man of *our* degenerate days were placed in the awful situation I have endeavoured to conjure up to my mind's eye, his brutal apprehensions would point to no other possibility than that of his getting a cold and losing his supper; while he would infallibly attribute any visitations of

sight or sound, however unaccountable, either to the last cheerer he had taken before starting, or to some derangements in the epigastric region. After all, however, one could excuse men of science for their sins against the imagination; it is "their vocation, Hal:" but we are reduced to despair when we see the very high priests who minister at her altar, lift the veil which has so long concealed the mysteries of her worship. We feel a mixture of grief and rage, such as would indisputably fire the breasts of the rising generation, if the gentleman who enacts Harlequin at Drury Lane were suddenly to step forward, and with a low bow explain the process by which the dear children had been deluded into an implicit belief that Mr. Grimaldi actually swallowed a hot poker forty feet long, and subsequently created a vegetable man out of certain carrots, turnips, and cabbages.

Sir Walter Scott,—that I should write it!—Sir Walter Scott hath done this cruel deed. He hath lifted up the veil, he has exposed the pullies and the ropes; and, in revenge I presume for the treatment which his White Lady received, has waved his potent wand dispersing her and all her shadowy kindred "into

thin air" for ever. The worst of the whole matter is, that there is no discrediting his facts, meeting his arguments, or upsetting his theories; so that his History of Demonology and Witchcraft will be as destructive to the faith of the scattered remnant of ghost seers as Sir Isaac Newton's lucubrations were to that of the believers in judicial astrology. Again, I repeat, we might have forgiven all this to Brewster, or Leslie, or Playfair, but Sir Walter Scott! "This was the unkindest cut of all:" and with respect to his book, we may use with *slight* alterations, a line in Chevy Chase and say, "The ghost shall rue who is unborn, the printing of that day."

After all this you will imagine, my dear friend, that I have been myself a firm believer in the world of spirits up to this period. No such thing. I was at one time of my life fairly haunted into incredulity, and so much troubled with apparitions, that out of pure indignation at the annoyance they occasioned me, I relinquished my ghostly faith *in toto*. More benevolent, however, than others, I felt no wish to diffuse my scepticism, or to deprive my friends of those enviable horrors which had ceased to communicate their plea-

surable agitation to my own mind.—Was it because *my* hair had ceased to stir at the appearance of a mysterious shadow; *my* heart to beat at an unaccountable groan, that I should wish to circumscribe those few inestimable emotions of the same nature which the progress of enlightenment and science had left in the possession of my friends? No, I could as soon have consented to explain to guests in the full enjoyment of a feast those mysteries of the kitchen upon which no wise man permits himself to reflect; or to the good-natured possessor of some inestimable antique, that I had seen it in process of manufacture under the ingenious hands of Signor Guiseppe Torello of the Strada di Toledo at Naples. Further forbearance, however, would be without an object, and since we *are* to have an end of Ghosts, Witches, Demons, and all that used to render so dear to our fancy, "the witching hour of night," it is as well to be, like Othello, merciful in our cruelty, and put them out of their misery at once.

Taking this view of the case, I trust that you will not consider me a recreant from the good old cause, if I narrate some circumstances which occurred to myself; so strongly corroborative of our Arch Heresiarch Sir

Walter Scott's relations, and so confirmatory of his theories, that I have kept them carefully concealed, for reasons already assigned, until now that to divulge them can no longer be construed into an assault upon that venerable edifice of superstition, so magnificently adorned by our imaginative ancestors, and so unmercifully levelled by our matter-of-fact selves. Indeed, instead of deserving any misconstruction for what I do, I may rather take to myself the credit due to a brave seaman who sticks to his vessel as long as she will swim, though perfectly conscious all the time that there is a leak as big as a punch-bowl under her bows; and who only casts off the gig's painter when he sees that no efforts of the crew can keep their shattered bark afloat a moment longer. The cases I am about to detail, appear to me to throw as strong a light on the true origin of the belief in spectral visitations, as any of those which have been placed before the public in the History of Demonology and Witchcraft; and if I had been so highly fortunate as to have had the honor of Sir Walter Scott's acquaintance, I should certainly have made a respectful tender of my ghosts for his acceptance and use.

When I was about fifteen, it was my hap to be resident in a lonely part of the suburbs of London. The house was occupied by a large family, including five or six domestics. Nevertheless, as it was about the period of the Mar and Williamson murders, which spread a panic terror throughout the metropolis and its environs, we were desired by the master of the mansion to secure our chamber doors at night; which injunction I, in common with the rest of the inmates, religiously obeyed.

It was about the beginning of January when the event I am about to relate occurred, and I perfectly remember, that it was on a Sunday night. The family were at rest, and I had been asleep for about three hours when I was awakened, probably by the cold, for the season was extremely severe. I first looked towards the window, through which I beheld the fleecy clouds careering before a strong gale across the clear orb of a bright frosty moon; while here and there the breaks in the cottony masses exhibited, in strong contrast to their own snowy purity, the deep azure of the firmament where a few stars sparkled with extraordinary lustre. On the opposite side of the street I saw the

roofs add chimneys heavily laden with snow, while the only noises that struck my ear were the whistling of the gale amongst a few leafless poplars, which stood before the house, and the tramp of the watchman, which, more rapid than usual, returned that dull crisp sound produced by treading on snow. As the guardian of the night passed our doors, he cried half past one o'clock, and I could hear him flapping his breast and taking each step with a stamp, as one contending furiously against the cold. I mention these trivial matters to show that what followed was no dream in the common acceptation of that term. As there was nothing very profitable in contemplating the moon, and the "early village cock" was not likely to tune his clarion for some hours, I resolved again to address myself to sleep, and for that purpose, gathering together a good grasp of blankets and counterpane, I commenced shifting my position from the right to the left side. In performing this evolution my eyes of course glanced across the foot of the bed, (where the curtains had been left open,) and in their quick transit encountered an object which speedily brought me to a full stop with half my projected manœuvre unaccomplished. I sank

on my back with my eyes peculiarly wide open, and well they might be. Right at the foot of the bed stood a figure, at least seven feet high, enveloped from head to foot in a dark drapery, which concealed any features it might have possessed, and fell in ample and heavy folds to the ground. The moon threw but a faint light into that portion of the apartment, but still sufficient for the clear, decided, relief of the dark figure from the less dusky back-ground.

My first sensation was not fear, because I imagined that it could only be a trick of some of the young people or servants in the house, and I resolved to disappoint the joke by the extreme non-chalance of my behaviour; but it suddenly occurred to me that I had shot the night-bolt as directed on retiring to bed, so that no "creature of earth's mould" *could* have found access to my chamber. This unconsolatory recollection produced a slight flutter about my heart, and a gentle tingling in the extremities by no means agreeable, and which were certainly not diminished by the behaviour of my visitant. If it had moved, I thought it would have given me relief: but no, there it stood, dark, gigantic, motionless, and voiceless, as one of those

mysterious statues which awe the traveller in the solitude of Thebes or Luxor; and what was worse, I felt from the position of the head, which was palpably defined beneath the drapery, that its terrible eyes were looking right into my own. I once or twice endeavoured to say something complimentary, as I was fully aware of the etiquette to be observed in all communications with ghosts, who, according to the best accounts never open the debate; but I confess, that besides feeling a sensation in my throat which I conceive a man would experience after swallowing a pound or two of sawdust, I was afraid to hear the sound of my own voice, and laboured under a great misgiving as to the effect which it might produce; so, gradually, as the only other course to be adopted, I drew my legs stealthily up as far as I could, sunk my head slowly beneath the counterpane, and assumed, as nearly as the human form divine will permit, the attitude of a hedgehog when he hears the near yelpings of half a dozen terriers. It was luckily a freezing night or I should have been suffocated; as it was the fountains of my forehead were opened, and while my heart kept beating a most remarkable tattoo within, my outward man was

now suffused by the worst damp glow of a rainy day in Bengal, and then again visited by such a shiver as a shower-bath affords in the month of January.

All this was very weak and pusillanimous, but I had been infamously exposed to ghost stories in my childhood; and besides, this was no ordinary visitation but a creature seven feet high, which I could by no means account for as most of my friends and relatives deceased had been middle-sized people, and the Irish giant was not then dead. But be that as it may, I lay nestling under the blankets, and prodigiously uncomfortable, until I again heard the tramp of the watchman. As he passed the door, and cried lustily "past two o'clock"—The very sound of a human voice was cheering, and inspired me with sense enough to reflect on my own folly. Pooh! I thought, this is worse than "the baby of a girl." I have had the nightmare, or been frightened by a dream, *nous verrons*. With the daring then of the great Roman who was an older and more terrible lion than danger, I relieved my unhappy head from some ten-pound weight of sheets, blankets, and other comforts, and looked boldly towards the foot of the bed. Positively I saw the very figure as I had last shut it

from my sight; silent, motionless, gigantic, and as palpable as the silver moon which glittered in at the window, or the articles of furniture which it lighted in the room. I confess that I was, to use a sailor's phrase, completely "taken aback" by a phenomenon I had so little anticipated; but, resolved to make such use as the exigency of the moment would permit of whatever sense had not been frightened out of me, I commenced a vigorous practical enquiry as to whether I was really asleep or awake. Ramming my knuckles two or three times into my eyes, and a smart pinch of the arm, convinced me that I was not in the former state, a fact which received fresh corroboration from my senses generally. I still saw the clear moon, the white clouds drifting rapidly over the heavens, the few twinkling stars, and the roofs of the opposite houses with their thick, snowy covering. I heard the poplars sighing and creaking in the gale, and the ticking of the large house clock on the stairs—in short, it was in vain to try to persuade myself that I was asleep. Still there stood my gigantic and silent visitant, though with what purpose, except that of frightening an inoffensive juvenile to death, I could not conjecture. Excess of

terror, however, sometimes breeds courage, or that despair which supplies its place: so arousing myself for the awful effort, I prepared to address my ghost in Nomine Domini, when all at once—it moved! A battery of twenty-four pounders opening unexpectedly within six feet of my ear could not have startled me more! Slowly did the awful form extend its arms, the heavy drapery falling from them in dark volumes; it bent over the bed in the attitude of one giving a blessing, (though heaven knows the whole ceremony was anything but a blessing to *me*,) and the veiled head approached my face. There was no standing this, so I once more took refuge in my covered way, though this time not without a serious misgiving that I might momentarily expect a tussle with my ghostly visitant for the sheets and blankets; or that I should speedily feel a death-cold hand tugging at my leg. I was, to say the truth, in an agony of terror only excusable in the vicinity of a horror seven feet high and very extensive; I think, therefore, that I deserve some credit for that rally of audacity which emboldened me, on hearing the watchman again pass by, crying past three o'clock, to uncover the corner of one eye. A timid glance at

the foot of my bed, and a rapid one round the chamber, gave me the gratifying assurance that the ghost was gone.

On the following morning, I examined the night bolt: it was all fast. I endeavoured to discover whether anything in the apartment could have cast a shadow at all resembling my spectral visitant. I saw clearly that it was impossible. I gave up a dozen attempts to imagine some natural solution of the apparition in despair, and at length became so assured of my having been actually face to face with some "spirit or goblin damned," (though whether it came with "intents wicked or charitable," it was impossible for me to conjecture,) that I mentioned the visitation to no one, because I felt reluctant to expose myself to ridicule for believing firmly in such a fact, which it was still utterly impossible for me to doubt.

Some time after the occurrence I have narrated, it was my good or ill luck to be attached to an expedition which sailed from Sicily under the orders of General Frederick Maitland, and which, after going into the Bay of Palamos, and coming out again with a very resolute air, finally settled itself down in the fortified

city of Alicant, to the great edification of the people of that pleasant place and the parts adjacent.

The first real march we made, after a good deal of mysterious dodging in and out of the town, was a most disagreeable specimen of campaigning; for although we did not fight, "because there was no enemy to fight withal," yet to show, I suppose, that we scorned to take a base advantage of the foe and come upon him by surprise, we contrived by a marvellous deliberation of movement which I could not have believed practicable, to march on a very excellent road, a "*camino reale*," about fourteen miles in seventeen hours, for the greater part of which period our men, not long out of ships, were exposed to the united pleasantries of green grapes and a burning sun. Next day, I remember, we marched back again. However, that is less to the purpose than what I am about to relate.

Having "eaten dirt," as the Persians say, in the most literal manner imaginable, and been half calcined by a Valencian sun during our dignified procession of seventeen hours, I was, on reaching our ground, sufficiently weary, and gladly accepted the offer of some "gracious Duncan," to repose in a waggon nearly full of

bags of biscuits and little rum puncheons. I, no doubt, slept well: time indeed, seemed annihilated between the period at which I closed my eyes, and that when I opened them again on a lovely summer dawn in the sweet south. The moon at full, and gloriously brilliant, was still high in the heavens; three parts of the mild azure canopy, were sprinkled with glowing stars, in the fourth they already paled before the gently coming Aurora. Far around me was the "stilly hum" of the army so beautifully noticed by the greatest of dramatists. Closer to my wheeled resting place the tinkling of the mule bells made pleasing music to the ear, while another organ inhaled unoffended the incense, not ungrateful at early morn, of the muleteers cigars.

On a sudden I heard the clattering of many horses hoofs along the "*camino reale,*" the hard high road from which our waggons had turned into the large field they occupied: (I am sorry to say it was one of green wheat.) Presently the noise seemed deadened, as by the riders turning into the soft ground of the field, and left the ringing of accoutrements and of bridles more audible. I looked towards the quarter from whence the sounds proceeded, and saw General Mackenzie, who

commanded the Brigade to which I was attached, Colonel Donkin, the Quarter-Master-General of our army, with an aid-de-camp of the former, our Brigade-Major, and about a dozen of the 20th Light Dragoons, in the bear-skinned helmet of that day. The whole party had just turned into the field, and were advancing towards my bivouac at an easy canter. There was nothing very wonderful in all this, but there was something exceedingly perplexing in a circumstance attending it. I have already said that the moon shone with great lustre, and that morning was breaking; yet notwithstanding several of the Dragoons carried torches, the red light of which flashing on the sabres of their comrades, or reflected from the silver mountings of their own dark helmets, formed a fine contrast of colour to the pale lustre of the moon sleeping on the green wheat-field. While I was still speculating on the cause of this unusual and gratuitous illumination, the Brigade-Major detached himself from the group in a smart gallop, and reining up when he arrived within a few yards of the waggons, called out:—

"Where is the Commissariat officer in charge of these waggons? They must be immediately drawn off:

the artillery are to occupy this ground." So, thought I, Monsieur le Duc d'Albafuera is more on the alert than some folks imagined; and, though the effects of yesterday's promenade would have given infinite zest to a recumbent position for half an hour longer, I was about to spring from my waggon, when all at once,—I found myself alone with the moon and stars,—the dawn, the field of green wheat, the tinkling of mule bells, the smell of cigars, and the guttural murmurs of the muleteers—but no General Mackenzie, no Donkin, no Brigade Major with a sonorous voice, leather-lined and many-buttoned over-alls, and cocked hat shaped like the new moon in a consumption; and above all, no 20th Light Dragoons with their perplexing torches. Every object around was precisely as it had appeared to me the very instant before, excepting the dignified and martial personages who were careering over the wheat field; but whether they had descended through a trap door, like Don Juan in the Pantomime, or vanished into thin air, surpassed my comprehension. All at once the whole truth came upon me, with the recollection of my old acquaintance seven feet high; *that* had been a delusion of the waking imagination like *this*—*this* at

once explained *that*—my eyes had on that occasion betrayed and deceived me, leaving all my other senses alert, on duty, and to explain as well as they could the treachery of their absent comrades.

On this occasion both my eyes and ears had conspired to act in the same unbecoming manner; for I could infinitely sooner comprehend such a solution of the phenomenon, than that a Major General, three Staff Officers, and a batch of that particularly ruddy regiment, the 20th Light Dragoons, could have become ghosts in the space of a few hours, unless, indeed, a battle had been fought while I was asleep.

Since the period I have alluded to my "*experiences*" —I believe the phrase is considered a good phrase on certain occasions of an analogous description — my ghostly experiences have been frequent, especially since my constitution has paid its usual tribute to this pleasant country.* My ghosts, although they have not disappeared with "a curious perfume and a melodious twang," have yet been satisfactory ghosts enough.

On one occasion, while I was actually engaged in

* Written in India.

conversation touching the purchase of an Arab mare, with a man lying in the same room, up stepped a mutual friend of yours and mine, who will not I trust be a ghost for these fifty years, but who was then at sea for his health; up he came I say with a bloodless dead face, dressed (it ought to have been the ghost of Sheridan's confidante) entirely in white linen, ten feet high, and leaning on a pair of gigantic crutches. This pleasing creature took up his station in the recess of the window, nor could any effort of mine banish him from it for full a quarter of an hour, although I continued in conversation anent the projected "deal" nearly the whole time.

At another period, (it was on board of the H.C. Ship, Princess Charlotte of Wales,) a sailor drowned that morning stood, livid and dripping, most perseveringly by my swinging cot, with his blue swollen visage and glassy eyes close to my own; and though of course my "experiences" had by this time enabled me to estimate such delusions at their real value, I cannot say that I felt any peculiar satisfaction from the presence of this visitor to my imagination from the dark depths of the ocean.

On a third occasion, at the foot of my bed, sat a very lovely young woman, whom we both remember, dressed in a splendid ball dress, with a wreath of bright hued flowers twined amidst the clustering locks of her beautiful hair: but her fine eyes were dim and glassy, her very perfect features were as those of the dead, and there was in them an expression of woe and misery indescribable. I endeavoured to detain this interesting spectre, but in vain; in about a quarter of an hour the form became indistinct, and gradually mingled with the darkness of the apartment. Oddly enough this lady had died on board of ship on her way to England in a strange and most melancholy manner; nor had the news of her decease reached India when I was favoured with the visitation I have described—a very unexpected one in truth, as I had scarcely the honor of her acquaintance, and certainly had not thought or heard of her for at least two years. This, then, was a very perfect ghost, for she was dead, her death was as yet unknown, and she had been, I may almost say, murdered. This then, I repeat, was a most unexceptionable apparition but for my previous "experiences," and but for one circumstance of a peculiarly unromantic and unspiritual nature.

I said the beautiful and mournful form *sat* at the foot of my bed, "*horresco referens*,"—it was upon a chillumchee. Not the ghost of a chillumchee,* my dear John, but an actual chillumchee in bodily presence, which I had not remarked over night, but which was made apparent by the kind of faint light that surrounded my lovely ghost, and which identical chillumchee I found in the same place on the following morning.

But for my moral. Although "one swallow does not make a summer," one ghost may make a believer. Had I never been thoroughly duped by my waking senses but once, and on that occasion my visitation had corresponded so closely as it *did* correspond with the most approved apparitions on record, I should in all probability have remained to this day impressed with a firm assurance, that ghosts are permitted to go to and fro on earth for the purpose of frightening people into cold perspirations; but when the delusion was cleared up in my own instance, the explanation brought with it a still firmer assurance that ninety-nine cases of ghost, out of every hundred, (far from being stories made "for

* This is a brass vessel upon a tripod, used for washing the hands in Bengal.

the nonce,") are exactly as well founded as my own first apparition—and no better; whilst the remaining fraction is either composed of tales altogether fictitious, of singular but calculable coincidences, (on which by the way a long chapter of authentic "experiences" might be written,) and lastly of impositions upon credulity or weakness. For my part, however, I must repeat my conviction, that no one would ever believe in ghosts, who had been half so much annoyed by them as, my dear John,

Your affectionate friend,

H. M. P.

END OF VOL. I.

London:—VARTY, Printer, Camomile Street, Bishopsgate.

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